



ABSTRACT

The principal purpose of this research was to analyze how grammar errors could be treated through Didacticized-Translation, an interesting option of Awareness-Raising that teachers can use for detecting and overcoming the most relevant grammar errors for students. This study was carried out with 18 students taking the subject 'Language Structure' at 'Catalinas High school'.

Data were elicited through classroom observations, questionnaires and interviews with students and teachers. The study showed that when errors are not given attention, they tend to go unnoticed. After the treatment students became aware of important differences between English and Spanish grammar that tend to cause them confusion. The research methodology used was qualitative for classifying the errors that the participants made during their writing tasks. The note-taking technique was used for observations and interviews, and the analytical-descriptive method was also used to analyze and describe the results found in the research.

Overall, the results of this study support the effectiveness of activating the awareness of grammar errors through Didacticized-Translation. It also shows that the use of students' L1 in certain situations can be beneficial, and it should not be completely banned in class. The students showed a constructive reaction to this new treatment. Errors were considerably reduced.

Key words

Didacticized-Translation

Note-taking

Analytical-descriptive

Students

Language Teaching

Autora:

Patricia Adriana Díaz Peralta



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Autora:

Patricia Adriana Díaz Peralta

Directora:

Dra. Irma Marquardt, PhD.

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Autora:

Patricia Adriana Díaz Peralta



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Al presentar esta tesis como uno de los requisitos previos para la obtención del título de Maestría en Lengua Inglesa y Lingüística Aplicada, por la Universidad de Cuenca, autorizo al Centro de Información Juan Bautista Vásquez para que haga de esta tesis un documento disponible para su lectura, según las normas de la Universidad.

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LIC. PATRICIA ADRIANA DIAZ P.

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my Father, who has helped me in so many ways and who was there for me when I most needed it. It is also dedicated to my mother, who taught me that even the largest task can be accomplished if it is done one step at a time...Mom, Dad, this Masters Degree Program would have been unachievable without your valuable help.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

As teachers, our goal is to improve students' proficiency in the target language. Therefore, we use a wide range of ideas and techniques to be used in the classroom, in the attempt to raise students' awareness and motivate them to learn.

As a teacher of English as a Foreign Language, raising students' awareness in order to help them notice important grammatical features became my interest and goal. This motivated me to carry out the present thesis titled: "*Awareness-Raising Activities for Secondary School students: A Task-based Approach to Treat and Possibly Prevent Common Errors*".

1.1 Background

The present thesis was carried out at 'Rosa de Jesus Cordero' High school, an all-girls school located in the town of 'Ricaurte', on the outskirts of Cuenca. The participants were 18 of my students of the subject *Language Structure*. They were approximately 15 years old. For them it was the first time that a teacher had given attention to their grammar errors. It was the first time that they were allowed to make use of Spanish in their classroom.

It is important to mention that in the past 'Catalinas' had always been guided by an "English Only" policy that made my students think that any use of Spanish in the classroom had only negative effects. As it will be shown in the results of the questionnaires carried out on students, they realized that the use of Spanish specifically for treating errors could be beneficial and not detrimental for their learning process.

1.2 Justification

English is the language that is being taught in educational institutions throughout Ecuador, as it is considered the official foreign language of our country. Currently, there are many ways that English is being taught in schools. Some of these ways reflect upon certain methods and approaches that nowadays can be considered as obsolete, others can be more modern such as



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the Communicative Approach. These methods and approaches have their own beliefs in terms of the actual use of English and how errors should be viewed. While some schools of thought support the use of only English in the classroom, even when it means delaying or omitting the explanation of a difficult term; others recur to the use of Spanish in special situations. Undoubtedly, this has become a very controversial topic of discussion that also lends itself to subjectivity. Whatever school of thought, method, or approach chosen by a teacher, the concern still remains the same; how can we as teachers prevent students from making the errors that seem “hard-wired” into their systems?

The present research was developed thinking of an existing need of the EFL community of teachers, as well as from the students who are evidently the starting point of this research; the need to provide treatment for the errors that were common and persistent to students learning English as a foreign language, whose native language is Spanish. It has the intention of demonstrating the benefits that *Didacticized-Translation* could bring to classrooms not only in Spanish speaking countries, but throughout the world. I am confident it will contribute to the improvement of English teaching in our community.

Although there has been research carried out about Awareness-Raising applied to different language skills, such as reading, writing, speaking, etc. (Walsh, Hegglin-Besmer, Oreto, etc.), this topic has not been carried out locally in our community.

The present research, therefore, attempts to treat one of the problems in learning English as a Foreign Language, the production of errors, through awareness-raising activities. Errors may occur due to gaps in students' knowledge and because of not giving certain aspects the importance they deserve; error correction is one of them. The main focus of this thesis was placed on grammar skills; these skills are essential for communicating, (spoken or written) despite the proficiency level or the students. This is why it is said that “Knowing more about the development of learner language helps teachers to assess teaching procedures in the light of what they can reasonably expect to accomplish in the classroom” (Lightbrown and Spada 77).

Autora:

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This study is important because it attempts to help the learner to form ‘an initial hypothesis about meaning-form knowledge’ (Walsh 1). In addition to this, through the use of the awareness-raising activities by means of the Didacticized-Translation tasks, the learner will be able notice ‘targeted features’. Didacticized-Translation is an alternative to treating errors that are common to EFL learners; it makes use of translation from English to Spanish.

I chose to focus my thesis on activities to raise my students’ awareness of grammar and specific grammatical features that I realized my students would benefit from. In my class I perceived that there was an evident need to help my students notice aspects of grammar that would improve their grammatical accuracy. I am confident that EFL teachers and EFL students will use the information obtained and in this way improve their language proficiency.

1.3 Objectives

1.3.1 General

The purpose of this thesis was to determine the grammar errors that were most difficult to overcome by my students and to introduce my students to Awareness-Raising activities that attempted to help them treat and possibly prevent these common errors. The Awareness-Raising activities were the ‘treatment’. This treatment was applied by using ‘Didacticized-Translation’, a method of Awareness-Raising that makes use of short written texts, previously prepared by the teacher, that students would translate from English to Spanish in order to help them notice troublesome grammatical features.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

- To determine the errors in grammar that were most difficult to overcome for my students according to their level of proficiency.
- To treat the grammar errors by working with ‘Didacticized-Translation’, using sets of Awareness-Raising activities that aimed to possibly prevent their reoccurrence.
- To demonstrate the acceptance of my students in regard to the activities designed as treatment for the most frequent errors they made while learning English as a foreign language.

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- To demonstrate the effectiveness of the use of students' native language by noticing important grammar features and preventing the reoccurrence of troublesome errors.

1.4 Outline

The presentation of this study is divided into five chapters as follows:

- Chapter One discusses the background and introduction to the study.
- Chapter Two reviews the theoretical framework that relates to the study.
- Chapter Three provides a review of the research design and the methodology of the study.
- Chapter Four reports the results obtained from the data collection: observation data, interviews, and questionnaires.
- Chapter Five discusses and analyzes the findings from the results obtained



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CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Knowing that Awareness-raising activities can be a significant tool for language teachers, below are key ideas and concepts that relate to the abovementioned topic. First, I begin with general learning issues, then I continue with issues related specifically with foreign language teaching.

2.1 Maslow's hierarchy of needs

Since learning has to do with human behavior, and both directly relate to “meeting basic needs”, we should remember Abraham Maslow, who introduced the idea of the hierarchy of needs. Two different categories are distinguished: *deficiency or maintenance needs*, and *being or growth needs*. This means that a student must meet basic needs such as security, self esteem, and nutrition. A student should not feel insecure or have low self-esteem, this way full attention could be given in class. (Williams and Burden 33). *Being needs* make reference to a person's “fulfillment of individual potential” (33), (Self-actualization, aesthetic, and cognitive needs).

What Maslow shows is that “children may be having difficulties with learning in school because their basic needs are not being met at home or in the classroom” (Williams and Burden 34), and this makes it clear why it is extremely important for teachers to establish a “secure environment where learners feel that they belong and where they can build up self-respect by receiving respect from others” (35) In addition to this, it is said that “Classroom tasks should be challenging and encourage curiosity in order to help learners realize their full potential” (35).

2.2 Motivation

It is known that when students feel they have a reason to learn, either for ‘social situations or to fulfill professional ambitions’, they will be motivated to acquire higher proficiency levels, they will be more interested to find out more things and will engage more in communicative situations. (Lightbrown and Spada 63). To continue, Lightbrown and Spada mention that “Teachers can make a positive contribution to students' motivation to learn if classrooms are

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Patricia Adriana Díaz Peralta



places that students enjoy coming to because the content is interesting and relevant to their age and level of ability, the learning goals are challenging yet manageable and clear, and the atmosphere is supportive” (64). In 1991, Graham Crookes and Richard Schmidt pointed out areas featured in educational psychology that supported the following beliefs:

- Teachers should motivate students into the lesson.
- Activities, tasks and materials should be varied.
- Goals should be cooperative instead of competitive.

Nevertheless, age and culture is a main starting point towards deciding how to motivate students.

Willis states that motivation can be integrative, or instrumental. Integrative when students “can admire and identify with the target language and culture”, and instrumental, “when they see the target language as a means to an end, such as further study or a good job”).

2.3 Types of learners: Analytical and holistic learners

Studies in educational psychology suggest that people learning anything – including second or foreign languages – broadly speaking, may use two distinct strategies: analytical and holistic. (Celce-Murcia and Hilles 5). These two types of learners are distinguished by their different cognitive styles. Analytical learners are said to show a preference for a deductive approach; a deductive approach is when they are given a rule and then they deduce examples that apply for each rule. Celcia-Murcia further states that analytical learners ‘form and test hypotheses: consciously or unconsciously, they extract paradigms and rules from examples’ (5).

On the other hand, holistic learners prefer to infer the rule, consciously or unconsciously, after having been given examples. Celcia-Murcia states that holistic learners “learn best by doing little or no analysis, instead they learn by exposure to large chunks of language in meaningful contexts (5). Analytical learners may be called ‘rule learners’ and holistic learners may be called ‘data gatherers’. Both learning strategies are affected by age and task-type . This is why teachers should not favor one approach over another; one approach will not be equally effective with all of their students (Celcia-Murcia 5).

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Once again, research has shown that, in order to attend to the needs of all the different learners, teachers should combine the beliefs of different methods and approaches to language teaching. In this way there will be a focus on the different learning styles and it will help learners to adapt to certain tasks.

Researchers are aware that to this day, there is no one method that can prove it is better than any other method. Nevertheless, after the efforts of many researchers, there is still a question that has never been able to be answered yet; “Under what conditions does effective language learning take place?” (Willis 11).

2.4 Learner Autonomy

As language teaching has received a shift in regard to its focus; there has been a change from traditional models, to more communicative ones (see below). There have been new trends concerning the teacher’s relationship with her students. One is known as *learner autonomy*. It submits “critical reflection, decision-making, and independent action’. In other words it allows for students to become *autonomous* learners, that is, learners that are “expected to assume greater responsibility for, and take charge of, their own learning.” When we think of learner autonomy we can see how it relates to *learner responsibility*. And according to Scharle and Szabo it is sometimes hard to decipher “when responsibility ends and where autonomy starts” (3). However, these terms are undoubtedly of much interest for teachers in our time. Chambers defines some characteristics of *student responsibility*:

- Intellectual maturity
- Learning skills
- Awareness to function as autonomous learners (Chambers, 2008)

2.5 Foreign language teaching and learning

Learning a second or foreign language is not an easy process. It is rather a complex one, due to the fact that every aspect concerning it should be taught with the attempt to gain native-like proficiency. While things are unconsciously learnt by native speakers of a language, who receive their input naturally from the time they are born, they must be *studied* by non-native speakers in order to



assimilate forms and uses of specific areas of language knowledge. However, it is known that with enough study, practice, and exposure, students can become competent in the language.

“Foreign language teaching and learning is an area in which despite the amount of research performed, we still do not know precisely important aspects concerning language acquisition, ways that promise better results, etc.”

(Marquardt 8). Furthermore, Littlewood claims: “Whatever theory or research that is analyzed, the final criterion for accepting any pedagogical idea is not whether it is valid from a theoretical perspective, but whether it produces more effective practice” (90).

Whatever the methodology chosen by the teacher, it is important that the learning environment be student-centered. In addition, it is known that teachers adopt a combination of different methodologies to better support the foreign language learning process. Teachers plan their way of approaching important aspects pertaining to the acquisition of a language. They use different techniques that go hand-in-hand with their beliefs and that makes true the following assumption according to Doug Anderson “A good teacher helps those who are doing poorly to do well, and helps those who are doing well to do even better”. A teacher is a facilitator, creator, actor, and researcher. All of these roles are performed with the intention of creating the best class environment possible in order to achieve the most desired results.

It is clear that teachers adopt their own mechanisms for attaining the main goal in language teaching: to enable communication to take place. Some teachers state that second language learners should be viewed as natural learners, that they should pass through a ‘silent period’ during which there is no pressure on them to speak the second language” (Littlewood 93).

2.5.1 Teaching Approaches

“Throughout history, there has always been an extensive search for the best way to learn a foreign language” (Crystal 394). The ways that describe best learning procedures reflect the beliefs found in approaches or methods of



language teaching. Although certain methods have gained more acceptance than others, no single method has proven to yield the best results in learning a foreign language (392). As mentioned in the Cambridge Encyclopedia of Language: “It is recognized that there are several ways of reaching the goal of Foreign Language competence...teachers need to be aware of a range of methods, in order to find the one most appropriate to the learner’s needs and circumstances, and to the objectives of the course” (394).

Richards and Rodgers claim: “Changes in language teaching methods throughout history have reflected recognition of changes in the kind of proficiency learners need, such as a move toward oral proficiency rather than reading comprehension as the goal of language study” (3). But beliefs about the ‘nature of language and language learning’ are also reflected in these changes.

Larsen-Freeman mentions nine approaches to language teaching that developed and were widely used during the final quarter of the twentieth century. They are the following (5)

1. Grammar-Translation Method
2. Direct Method
3. Reading Approach
4. Audiolingual Method
5. Oral-Situational Approach
6. Cognitive Approach
7. Affective-Humanistic Approach
8. Comprehension-Based Approach
9. Communicative Language Teaching Approach

In regard to the history of language learning, at first Latin was commonly studied because it formed part of the curriculum of European schools. Learning Latin meant demonstrating how well-educated a person could be. The learning of Latin consisted of “textbooks of statements of abstract grammar rules, lists of vocabulary, and sentences for translation” (Richards and Rodgers 4). The procedures used for teaching Latin influenced the first approach to foreign language teaching: the Grammar-Translation Method.

After the Grammar-Translation Method, further methods of language teaching started to come into being. Each one had its own ways of explaining how



languages can best be acquired. The following is a summary of other methods of language teaching mentioned by Larsen-Freeman (Larsen-Freeman qtd. by Nazary 4) and their relation with the use or otherwise of the students' native language:

Direct Method and Audiolingual Method: The students' native language (L1) should not be used in the classroom because it is thought that it will interfere with the students' attempts to master the target language (L2).

Silent way: The students native language can, however, be used to give instructions when necessary, and to help a student improve his or her pronunciation. The native language is also used (at least at beginning levels of proficiency) during feedback sessions.

Suggestopedia: Native-language translation is used to make the meaning of the dialogue clear. The teacher also uses the native language in class when necessary. As the course proceeds, the teacher uses the native language less and less

Community Language Learning: Students' security is initially enhanced by using their native language. The purpose of L1 is to provide a bridge from the familiar to the unfamiliar. Also, directions in class and sessions during which students express their feelings and are understood are conducted in their L1.

Total Physical Response: This method is usually introduced initially in the students' native language. After the lesson introduction, rarely is the native language used. Meaning is made clear through body movements.

Communicative Language Teaching: Judicious use of the students' native language is permitted in communicative language teaching.

Taken from (Larsen-Freeman qtd. by Nazary 4)

As shown above, the students' native language has had a variety of functions nearly in all teaching methods except in the Direct Method and Audiolingualism. As stated by Marquardt: "These methods had their theoretical underpinnings in Structuralism and assumed language learning to be a process of habit formation, without considering the students' affect, background knowledge and their linguistic abilities in their L1"(4).



The following are three approaches to language teaching, all relevant to this thesis. The first, the Grammar-Translation Method, was briefly introduced above; the second, Communicative Language Teaching, is considered as the method that the majority of schools and teachers follow due to its focus on communicative competence. The third, Task-based Learning, is the main approach which is adopted in this thesis.

2.5.1.1 Summary of the Grammar-Translation Method

As mentioned earlier, an important event in the history of grammar is the undertaking of what was then known as *the grammar translation method*. It dominated European foreign language teaching from the 1840s to the 1940s (Richards and Rodgers 6). In the past, it was also called the Classical Method because it was used for teaching classical languages such as Latin and Greek (Larsen-Freeman 11). These languages were studied by people that were considered well-educated, essentially in order to become more literate; specifically ‘to read and appreciate foreign language literature’ (11). The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Language describes the Grammar Translation Method as “based on the meticulous analysis of the written language, in which translation exercises, reading comprehension, and the written imitation of texts play a primary role”. In fact, as Crystal also affirms, “even though students would probably never use the target language, the mental exercise of learning it would be beneficial anyway” (394). The grammar translation method was “a way of studying a language that through detailed analysis of its grammar rules, followed by application of this knowledge to the task of translating sentences and texts into and out of the target language” (394). According to Richards and Rodgers, its main characteristics were the following:

- The main goal was to learn a language in order to read its literature or in order to benefit from the mental discipline and intellectual development that result from foreign language study (5).
- Students learned vocabulary by memorizing, with the help of a dictionary and bilingual word lists.
- The focus was on sentences and they were translated to and from each language.



- There was a focus on accuracy.
- A final characteristic was that speaking and writing were collectively considered as active skills, while reading and listening were considered as passive skills (14)

The grammar translation method kept its popularity when American structural linguistics and behaviorist psychology became dominant.

However, in more recent times, “A concern developed to make foreign language teaching ‘communicative’ by focusing on learners’ knowledge of the functions of language, and on their ability to select appropriate language for use in specific situations” (Crystal 394). With this concern, each method of language teaching tried its best to improve in some aspect in order to better provide the learner with opportunities of using the language more meaningfully. This gave rise to Communicative Language Teaching.

2.5.1.2 Summary of Communicative Language Teaching

Although there was always the desire of incorporating new ways to enable improved communication in a foreign language, it was not until this method, communicative language teaching, was introduced that foreign language teachers began to notice the need for students to become ‘competent’ in the language of study (Larsen-Freeman 121). Teachers began to discover that although students knew the grammatical rules of the language, they should also know functions such as: “promising, inviting, and declining invitations within a social context (Wilkins cited by Larsen-Freeman 121). This is why in Communicative Language Teaching “teaching materials, course descriptions, and curriculum guidelines proclaim a goal of communicative competence” (Savignon, 13). To cite an example, the guidelines published by the Japanese Ministry of Education, Science, and Culture (“Mombusho”), state the following objectives: “To develop students’ ability to understand and to express themselves in a foreign language; to foster students’ positive attitude towards communicating in a foreign language, and to heighten their interest in language and culture”. (13).

Savignon makes an interesting comparison with communication and a football game. In a football game, interest is placed on the moves and strategies



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of the players, not necessarily on the football. This is similar to what happens with communication, “the interest of communication lies similarly in the moves and strategies of the participants” (15). As one can see, this comparison gives us an idea of the importance of learners working collaboratively. The collaboration that is emphasized in this method is best described by the terms interpretation, expression, and negotiation of meaning (15).

The distinctive features that characterize Communicative Language Teaching according to (Finocchiaro and Brumfit qtd by Richards and Rodgers 157) are

- Meaning is paramount.
- Dialogues, if used, center on communicative functions and are not normally memorized.
- Language learning is learning to communicate.
- Comprehensible pronunciation is sought, as opposed to native-speaker like pronunciation.
- Any device that helps the learner is accepted – varying according to their age, interest, etc.
- Judicious use of native language is accepted where feasible
- Translation may be used where students need or benefit from it
- The target linguistic system will be learned best through the process of struggling to communicate
- Communicative competence is the desired goal
- Teachers help learners in any way that motivates them to work with the language.
- Fluency and acceptable language are the primary goal: Accuracy is judged not in the abstract but in context.
- The teacher cannot know exactly what language the students will use.
- Intrinsic motivation will spring from an interest in what is being communicated by the language

(Finocchiaro and Brumfil 91-93 qtd by Richards and Rodgers).

As one can see, Communicative Language Teaching arose because of the need for learners to have ‘the experience of communication’, and because of the shortcomings of previous methods of language teaching. In regards to

Autora:

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communication, a key aspect that reinforces communication is communicative competence. Authors like Canale and Swain describe four specific elements in communicative competence: grammatical, discourse, sociolinguistic and strategic. Communicative Language Teaching focuses more on sociolinguistic competence, “the ability to use language appropriate to a given situation including the appropriate choice of register and knowing when to say or not to say something”, and strategic competence, “the ability to use inference, paraphrasing, and repetition to cope with situations in which language or comprehension is lacking”, because they are directly concerned with language use (Stryker and Leaver 12-13).

2.5.2 Task-based approach in foreign language teaching

Task-Based Language Instruction (TBLI) refers to an approach based on the use of tasks as the core unit of planning and instruction in language teaching (Richards and Rodgers 221). Students have abundant opportunities to interact. By interacting with others, they get to listen to language which may be beyond their present ability, but which may be assimilated into their knowledge of the target language for use at a later time (144). TBLI shares principles with Communicative Language Teaching. Tasks involving real communication are seen as essential for language learning:

- Activities in which language is used for carrying out meaningful tasks promote learning.
- Language that is meaningful to the learner supports the learning process.

Richards and Rodgers mention the following ‘key assumptions of task-based instruction’ (224).

- The focus is on process rather than product.
- Basic elements are purposeful activities and tasks that emphasize communication and meaning.
- Learners learn language by interacting communicatively and purposefully while engaged in the activities and tasks.
- Activities and tasks can be either those that learners might need in real life, or those that have a pedagogical purpose specific to the classroom.



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- Activities and tasks of a task-based syllabus are sequenced according to difficulty.
- The difficulty of a task depends on a range of factors including the previous experience of the learner, the complexity of the task, the language required to undertake the task, and the degree of support available.

Feez qtd by (Richards and Rodgers 224)

To continue, tasks can be chosen by the teacher, with the intention of focusing on fluency, or on accuracy; In fact, Skehan qtd by Richards and Rodgers state “tasks can be designed along a cline of difficulty so that learners can work on tasks that enable them to develop both fluency and awareness of language form”. He further suggests: “tasks can be used to “channel” learners toward particular aspects of language”. In addition to this, “proponents of TBL recommend that the task sequence include some directed attention on features of the language; that is Consciousness-Raising (Thornbury 1)

An important piece of research was performed by Prahbu in 1970. It was in Bangalore, Southern India. Prahbu and his colleagues were “dissatisfied by traditional methodology and with syllabuses which consisted of grammatical items” (Harmer 35). Prahbu suggested that if emphasis was placed on meaning, language would be learnt incidentally (35). He came up with what was known as the Bangalore Project, for which he made a syllabus that included tasks in which students had to solve problems. This project showed excellent results due to its ‘radical theories of language learning’.

2.5.2.1 Types of tasks

Willis, a strong proponent of Task-Based Learning introduces six types of task:

- Listing: Students make use of such processes as brainstorming and fact-finding.
- Ordering and sorting: These tasks have to do with four main processes:
 - o Sequencing items, actions or events



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- Ranking items according to personal values or specified criteria
 - Categorizing items in given groups or grouping them under given headings
 - Classifying items in different ways, where the categories themselves are not given (Willis 26).
- Comparing: Comparing information of a similar nature but from different sources. The processes involved are: matching to identify specific points and to relate them to each other, finding similarities and things in common, and finding differences.
 - Problem-Solving: making students use their reasoning and intellectual powers (Willis 27).
 - Sharing personal experiences. Students are encouraged to talk freely about themselves and share their experiences with others.
 - Creative tasks: Students work in pairs or groups and perform 'freer creative work'; they also combine other task types such as listing, ordering, etc.

Moreover, Nunan mentions two types of tasks: reproductive tasks and creative tasks. According to him, a reproductive task is one in which the learner reproduces language that is previously given to him by the teacher or any other means. The characteristic of reproductive tasks is for the language to be 'predictable'; what is going to be said is previously known. This is used specially for communicative tasks. On the other hand, a creative task is one in which although the teacher can have an idea of what language will be used, there is no way to know exactly what language will be used; it is less predictable (63).

2.5.2.2 Components of the TBLI framework

The TBLI Framework, according to Willis, is made up of three stages: *Pre-task*, *Task cycle*, and *Language focus*. *Pre-task* is the introduction to the topic and to the task; the teacher helps students with instructions and useful words in order for students to prepare for the task. Next is the *Task cycle*; it consists of different aspects, such as: task, students do the task while the



teacher monitors them; planning, students get prepared to report to the whole class; and report, some students report to the whole class or they present their reports in written form. In the language focus stage, the learners focus on language that the teacher has previously provoked by the task itself, in the form of listening or reading (38).

2.5.2.3 Learner roles

As mentioned by Willis, “learners will be experiencing English throughout the whole *Task cycle* (41). The focus is to expose the learner to the target language. Richards and Rodgers describe roles that are implied by task work. They are the following:

- Group participant: work can be done in pairs or in groups.
- Monitor: The focus is for students to notice how language is used in communication. “Learners themselves have to ‘attend’ not only to the message in task work, but also to the form in which such messages typically come packed” (235).
- Risk-Taker and Innovator: The learner should develop skills that will enable him/her to ‘create and interpret’ messages because of their lack of experience and knowledge of the target language. They should restate, paraphrase, guess, ask for clarification, consult with others, etc.

2.5.2.4 Teacher roles

Richards and Rodgers recognize the following teacher roles in TBLI: the teacher is a selector and sequencer of tasks; he/she is responsible of setting up the task, taking into consideration things like: learner needs, interests, and language skill level (236).

The teacher prepares learners for tasks: There is a ‘pre-task’ preparation; either by familiarizing learners with key vocabulary that will be useful for the task, or showing how the task should be done as a demonstration to the students.

The teacher raises the learner’s consciousness. “Current views of TBLT hold that if learners are to acquire language through participating in tasks, they need to attend to or notice critical features of the language they use and hear;



this refers to focus on form” (236). In addition, the teacher can apply a variety of techniques that focus on form. He/she can also include ‘attention-focusing pre-task activities, text exploration, guided exposure to parallel tasks, and the use of highlighted material.

Furthermore, in Task-based Instruction, the teacher can make use of instructional materials such as pedagogic materials and realia which can be found in: newspapers, television, and the Internet.

Another description of roles assumed by teachers is given by Willis. Willis acknowledges that the TBLI framework invites the learner to ‘learn by doing things’; this means that the teacher’s role is that of a facilitator. “The teacher is involved in setting tasks up, ensuring that learners understand and get on with them, and drawing them to a close (40).

2.5.3 Learners and Foreign Language Learning

This has been a topic that is open to much research, analysis and observation; all of these are performed with the hope of trying to describe the process of learning. What teachers and researchers *can* agree on is that “Learning occurs both consciously and subconsciously.” In fact, “progress does not only occur when people make conscious efforts to learn. Progress also occurs as a result of spontaneous subconscious mechanisms, which are activated when learners are involved in communication with the second language” (Littlewood, 25) However, there are certain aspects that deserve more attention than others; such is the case with the errors that are common and repetitive among students. In this case, learners should be given carefully designed activities to be performed in order to try to deal with the errors, and these activities should be *consciously* carried out by them, in order for them to accomplish their real purpose, which is to make them become aware of things when they need to.

When we think of language learners, the term *Interlanguage* (IL) comes to our attention. It is a term suggesting an intermediate state between knowing and not knowing the TL (James 3). It is also known as idiosyncratic dialect. This makes us acknowledge the fact that certain groups of learners develop systems that have things in common. The most obvious group is of learners with a common

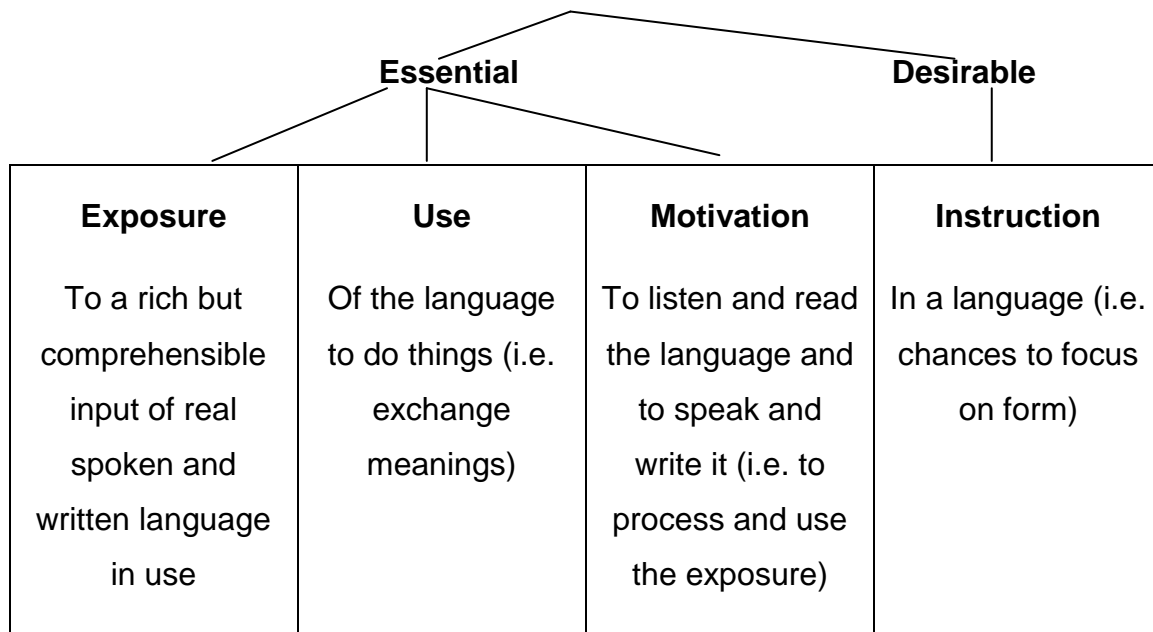


L1. In addition to this, it is “the abstraction of learner language, the aggregate of forms, processes and strategies that learners resort to in the course of tackling an additional language” (James 7).

2.5.4 Conditions for Language Learning

Most researchers have recognized three conditions that ‘should be applied to all learners regardless of their cognitive styles’ (Willis 10), plus an additional one that is not as essential, but is considered as desirable. They are: Exposure, use, motivation, and instruction; they are shown in the following diagram:

Table 1: Conditions for Language Learning



Taken from (Willis 11)

Exposure

This is the first condition that should be met by learners of a foreign language. Learners have to be ‘exposed’ to the language; they need to have encounters that will bring them as close as they can get to the language, given the fact that English is not a language that they can try to make sense of on a daily basis. They should be given the opportunity to make sense of the input they receive; this input will be of most benefit if it is according to their level. Willis mentions,



“Learners are likely to use strategies to adjust the input to suit their level of comprehension” (11).

The teacher plays an essential role in *exposure* because he/she is aware that certain input must be modified so that it meets the capabilities of a learner given his/her level; this input can also be in the form of ‘classroom language’.

Willis mentions that another basic point in *exposure* is that the ‘quality of exposure’ has been found to be more important than the quantity. The example she provides, is that of pronunciation; quality is not only regarded as showing learners’ ‘good pronunciation’, but the ability to use a ‘variety of types of language’, e.g. informal chat vs. monologues.

Use of language

Willis states: “If learners know that in class they will be expected to make real use of the target language themselves, this leads them to pay more attention to what they hear and read, and to process the input more analytically noticing useful features of language. Thus, output can encourage intake”. (13). Noticing is a key topic that will be discussed later.

Learners are invited to become active participants in the learning; they are given opportunities to show their contributions in an environment that is free of pressure. Willis says “It is important, especially with less confident learners, to create a positive, supportive, low stress atmosphere that encourages creativity and risk- taking (13). In addition, they do in fact need the “experience of communicating in a variety of situations” because their “linguistic strategies differ according the circumstances”.

Instruction

Willis says: “students will not necessarily learn what we teach them when we teach them”. Learners learn at different rates, they have a natural order of acquisition that makes it easier to learn certain language features before others. When instruction focuses on form, students can notice certain features of the target language. Willis cites the following example:

“Once they have had their attention drawn to the use of the words *thing* and *things* in spoken phrases such as *The thing is...or and things like that.*

Autora:



Subsequently, each time they notice a phrase with the word *thing*, they stand to gain a new insight into its use. These all become learning opportunities (16)".

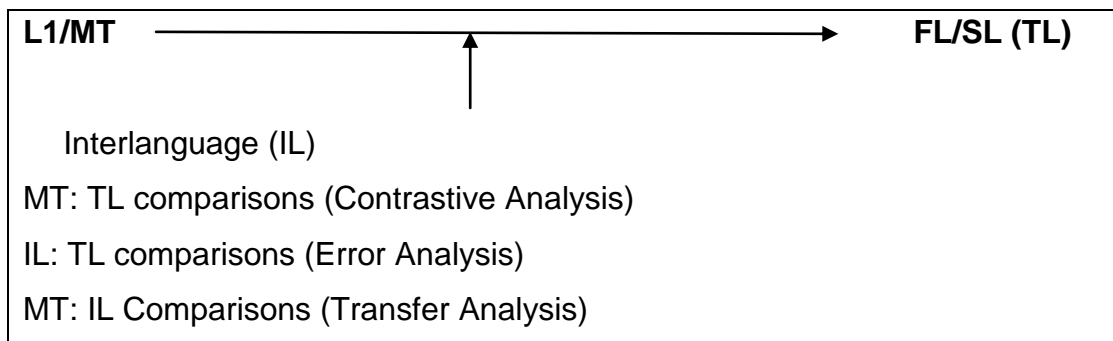
Awareness-Raising activities can be of much help because they emphasize specific aspects of language that occur in reading and listening texts, among others. To conclude, instruction can help students notice specific features of the target language.

2.6 Contrastive Analysis

In the 1950s and 1960s much attention was placed upon a new philosophy of language teaching: Contrastive Analysis. Its beliefs were based on the Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis, linked to Behaviorism. It was a "powerful influence on second and foreign language teaching, especially in North America between the 1940s and the 1970s" (Lightbrown and Spada 34).

According to James, there are points of comparison for successive foreign language learning paradigms. They can be seen in the following chart:

Table 2: Points of comparison for successive FL learning paradigms



(Extracted from James 3)

As we can see from the chart, there is always the native language or L1 that a learner of a second language masters before he/she attempts to acquire a second one. In fact, for the EFL teacher who shares knowledge of the students' L1 this becomes a great advantage. The reason lies in the fact that between the first language and the target language there will always be a language that is being developed by the learner. This is known as *interlanguage*, "the half way position it holds between knowing and not knowing the TL" (James 3).



2.6.1 The Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (CAH)

In 1957, Lado wrote “Linguistics across Cultures”. The basic assumption of the CAH was that “language learning could be more successful when the two languages - the foreign and the native one – are similar” (Kebbe 2). Additionally, Lightbrown and Spada mention that a simplified version of the CAH would predict that, where differences exist, errors would be bi-directional (79). For instance French speakers learning English and English speakers learning French would make the same errors.

All in all, the main focus was for teachers to work on the errors repeatedly made by students, errors that were thought to be possible to predict. In fact, “from such mistakes, the assumption went on; teachers would be better equipped to foresee difficulties and, consequently, would become wiser in directing learning and teaching efforts” (Kebbe 2).

Among other things, Contrastive Analysis (CA) held that difficulties were natural in language learning. In fact, where two language patterns were exactly the same, there would be what was known as *positive transfer*; here learning would take place. However, when there were two different patterns, there would be *negative transfer*; learning difficulties would arise. The errors back then were considered as “bad habits” that would hold back the use of correct language forms. When we think of “bad habits”, we can recall how CA was linked to habit formation, which came from the Behaviourist view of language learning.

As mentioned earlier, the basic assumption was that two languages that shared similarities would be easier to learn, as is the case of German and English, which share certain similarities in words, syntax and pronunciation; while languages that are very different would be difficult to learn, as is the case with Korean and English, languages that have totally different alphabets, syntax and vocabulary.

Subsequently, linguists and researchers began to disagree with these assumptions, and they began to realize that errors when a student is learning a second or foreign language were not only caused by language transfer or the transfer of habits, they were also attributed to issues regarding the language they



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were learning (intralingual). Chen mentions that errors of this type include: undergeneralization, overgeneralization, misanalysis, incomplete rule application, and hypercorrection (2). These are discussed further below. Moreover, linguists and researchers started to agree on the fact that “behaviourism and the contrastive analysis hypothesis were inadequate explanations for second language acquisition” (Lightbrown and Spada 35).

As also mentioned by Swan, the discrediting of CA based its reasons on the weaknesses found in it. The main ones are stated below:

- It was connected with an obsolete model of language description known as *Structuralism*.
- It was related with a learning theory called Behaviourism, which had started to lose its reputation in the 1970s. Behaviourist theories held that the main hindrance to learning was interference caused by prior knowledge. ‘Difficulty’ was seen as “the amount of effort required to learn an L2 pattern” (Ellis 300).

- *Underprediction*

CA underpredicted learners errors; there were errors that would not be noticed. In fact, learning difficulties would occur when elements of L2 did not exist in L1. Some of the predictions that were made based on comparisons between two languages were already assumed and known by teachers, meanwhile other errors could not necessarily be predicted by CA. However, Odlin, cited by Swan’s online journal states that “some differences between languages do not always lead to significant learning difficulties” (1). In fact, we can recall the example mentioned by Swan: the verb “to know”, which in Spanish means *conocer* or *saber*; for an English learner of Spanish, can cause problems, meanwhile for Spanish learners of English this can be easily assimilated.

- *Overprediction*

CA overpredicted learner errors: differences in two languages do not necessarily imply difficulty. It was assumed that CA would identify difficulties by means of spotting the differences between two languages; these differences would exist in both languages; in other



words, the difficulty would be bidirectional. This traditional view of CA as mentioned in Swan's Online Journal, meant that "French speakers learning English and English speakers learning French would make errors on parallel linguistic features" however this was not accurate. In fact, to cite an example we can consider the use of object pronouns in English and Spanish. While object pronouns can be problematic for English learners of Spanish, they are not as difficult for Spanish speaking learners of English. We can also consider the "Be verb" with its translation in Spanish, *ser o estar*. CA overpredicted learner problems.

This summarizes what has been written about Contrastive Analysis, It helps to better understand how a new approach to language errors appeared. It was seen that Contrastive Analysis could not explain key aspects to language learning; therefore, researchers in the 1970s began to take a different approach to language by analyzing learners' errors. It was called *error analysis*.

2.7 Error Analysis

When we think of languages and how they are acquired by native speakers versus how they are learnt by non-native ones, the difference lies in the *areas of knowledge* that the native speaker genuinely has. This knowledge is what learners need in order to become competent in key aspects such as: "pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, appropriacy, discourse and language skills" (Harmer 11). Accordingly, due to the similarities and the differences that exist between each language, some areas can be quite understandable and easily assimilated by learners, while others can cause them confusion, frustration, and therefore errors.

This is precisely one of the topics of many linguists' research: investigating native speakers' knowledge (Harmer 13) and trying to think of the best ways to describe that knowledge; this is the case of the grammatical system, an aspect that I intend to cover in this thesis.

Errors are one of the signals that show teachers that something is in the process of being learnt. At higher levels, they can be, as James describes it, "unsuccessful bits of language" (1); in other words, they can become little the



importance given to learners' errors led to the appearance of the research methodology known as *Error Analysis*.

The person who is remembered for having revived *Error Analysis* with a seminal paper "The Significance of Learners' Errors", written in 1967, was S. Pit Corder. He had made five crucial points that are still valid; in fact, two of them are relevant for my thesis.

- "Errors are evidence of the learners' in-built syllabus, or of what they have taken in, rather than what teachers think they have put in: *intake should not be equated with input.*"
- "Errors are significant in three respects: they tell the teacher what needs to be taught; they tell the researcher how learning proceeds; and they are a means whereby learners test their hypotheses about the L2."

Error analysis is defined as "the process of determining the incidence, nature, causes and consequences of unsuccessful language" (James 1). Moreover, James affirms that as long as there is incompleteness or failure to attain full native speaker-like knowledge of the TL, there will be Error Analysis. In fact, according to the same author, "the object of enquiry of the Error Analyst is the FL learner's ignorance of the TL".

Table 3: Differences between Contrastive Analysis and Error Analysis.

CONTRASTIVE ANALYSIS	ERROR ANALYSIS
Pedagogical orientation	Scientific orientation
Focus on input, practice, inductive learning	Focus on linguistic and cognitive processes
Errors of transfer	Multiple types of errors.

(Information extracted by James and summarized by A.D)

There have been many studies which have chosen to adopt Error analysis as its methodology for investigating learner language. Reasons for doing so are because 'it constitutes an appropriate starting point for the study of learner language and L2 acquisition (Ellis 48). We should acknowledge that Error



Analysis came into favor because of the weaknesses found in Contrastive Analysis; the aforementioned was a traditional analysis that 'lacked both a rigorous methodology and a theoretical framework for explaining the role played by errors in the process of L2 acquisition' (48). However, in the 1970s Error Analysis became a recognized part of applied linguistics. It is said that Error Analysis in no way tries to focus on the fact that something negative has been committed. What it tries to show is that there is a discrepancy between what learners tend to say or write, and what native speakers tend to say or write. This discrepancy shows itself through the errors that are produced by learners of a second or foreign language.

Concerning errors, it is important to point out that they should be identified according to "a rule that a learner has been violating" (Burt and Kiparsky, cited by James 93). A teacher should regard something as incorrect, if the learner has already been taught certain rule which has been in fact violated. What is desirable is for the learner to stop making the same errors and to start adopting the appropriate way of using something, in the target form. In this respect, it is necessary to clarify the difference between an error and a mistake.

Table 4: Difference between error and mistake

ERROR	MISTAKE	AUTHOR
The errors are made in comprehension and in production	They are of no significance to the process of language learning	Corder, 1967 (167)
The result of some failure in performance		Corder, 1971 (152)
1 st stage: L does something completely wrong without knowing it 2 nd stage: L knows of what was done incorrectly but does not know how to do it right		Snow, 1977 (49)



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	For all ways of being wrong as an FL learner. Deviance could be: slips, errors and attempts	Edge 1989 (11)
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(Taken from James 80; A.D.)

Studies of second language acquisition reveal parameters of performance of teachers and how they try to transmit their knowledge of the language in the best way possible. In addition, students demonstrate a natural process as they try to become competent in the language. However, there is no doubt that as much as teachers would desire it, students do not learn all that is being taught to them. This of course depends on different factors. In fact, a common complaint held by all teachers is that “learners often go on making the same error even after being corrected many times” (Willis 5).

James makes the following reference for language teachers: “...we need to ask what sorts of ‘groups of learners’ develop systems that have something in common; the most obvious group is of learners with a common L1” (4). For teachers teaching a group of monolingual learners’ errors can become somewhat predictable due to the fact that they share a common language, such as Spanish, in our case. The sharing of a common language spoken in the place where the target one is being learnt is in fact a big strength that, when properly used, can be truly beneficial. As James mentions, “There is at least one other language involved in the FL learning operation: the learner’s mother tongue (MT) or L1 (4).

An article that mentions a study on error analysis was written by Chen, of the National Cheng-chi University of Taiwan. He carried out a pilot study to identify the errors of 12 Chinese-speaking children whose mean age was 9 and who were learning English and a Foreign Language. The purpose of this study was to understand the process of their English development. Two sessions were audio-taped and video-taped. An error analysis was applied. The results of the study implied that Mandarin-speaking children’s L2 development is very similar to the language acquisition of English-speaking children. Also, the study implied that children make intralingual errors due to incomplete application of rules; however they also commit interlingual errors. Finally, it was implied that the lack



of exposure of children to the English language makes it probable that their errors are caused by interference of Chinese (Chen).

A study carried out by Dulay and Burt in 1974, still important nowadays, collected samples from 179 Spanish speaking children (Shreastha 6). Errors were classified as being from L1 interference, intralingual or unique. 5% of the 513 unambiguous errors were caused by L1 interference. 87% were intralingual and the rest were classified as “unique”. Their conclusion led them to believe that “children do not use their first language habits in the process of learning the syntax of their new language”. Moreover, a study carried out by Duskova in 1969 on Czechoslovakians (Shreastha 7) found that “30% of the 1007 errors collected were interference and the remainder was intralingual”. It seems that the main error was the omission of the articles and this was a part of speech for which Czech does not have an equivalent. Another study was carried out with students from Universiti Pertanian Malaysia. Its main purpose was to categorize and evaluate the types of errors that students make in urban schools and rural schools in written compositions. It was found that the errors between them were different. For instance, errors of the use of articles represented 75% in the case of the rural students, while the errors represented 2% in urban students. This study showed that there was a difference in the percentage of errors for the items studied between the rural and urban students. Other studies carried out by Farooq, Chen, Chiung-chiuen, Malachiedwin, among others, have come to similar conclusions.

2.7.1 Steps in Error Analysis Research

James mentions steps that are followed in the analytical procedure of Error Analysis. They are as follows:

- Error detection: This refers to how an error is detected, is it ‘on-screen’, or was it found printed out? What were the means by which they were found?
- Locating errors: Were they at sentence level, or are they considered as global errors? How are they regarded? As something that was detected because of what a learner said or wrote, or because of something that the learner did not say or write?



- Describing errors: Error analysis is ‘target-language oriented’ (James 95). However, it analyzes learner language, *interlanguage* to be precise. Error description serves two purposes: first, to make something explicit relying on one’s intuition; secondly, to label things that will allow for a better understanding. This will allow the researcher to acknowledge how many times certain errors are produced. The third purpose is to create categories; in this way, one can keep track of which errors belong in the same class; this would be impossible if one only relied on one’s intuition.
- Error classification: the researcher can find out which errors are the same and which are different. Nowadays, there are different ways of organizing errors and putting them into categories. They can be found in what are known as ‘dictionaries of errors’, which contain lexical and grammatical information, and ‘dictionaries of false friends’, dictionaries that list words according to how the learner’s mother tongue relates to the target language, to the “degree of cognateness” (James 101). To cite two important ones, dictionaries that contain grammatical information are Turton’s “ABC’s of Common Grammatical Errors” and Fitikides’s “Common Mistakes in English”. In the latter dictionary, information regarding errors is organized into the following sections:
 - Misused forms (wrong prepositions, tense, etc)
 - Incorrect omission: (of prepositions, etc)
 - Unnecessary words (prepositions: *please answer to my words*)
 - Misplaced words: (*he worked yesterday at home*)
 - Confused words: (*to-at; borrow-lend, etc*)

The above steps are discussed in more detail below. In addition, a further step, explaining the possible causes of errors, is discussed.

Error Detection

According to Ellis, this step is pursued after the researcher has obtained a corpus of language that will be worked with. The researcher therefore, must decide what is considered as an error; he/she must establish a procedure for recognizing errors. First, the researcher must decide what the *norm* of the



language will be; for instance standard dialect can be used in written compositions but it cannot be used if language is being produced orally.

In addition, the researcher must acknowledge the *variability of learner language*, meaning that certain errors can be more noticeable in some linguistic contexts rather others; this will depend on what the student has learnt beforehand.

Finally, the researcher should determine if the error is overt or covert (Corder cited by Ellis 52). An overt error is easy to identify because you can notice the deviation in form, for instance, 'I readed the whole book'. On the other hand, covert errors "occur in utterances that are superficially well-formed but which do not mean what the learner intended them to mean. For instance, "It was stopped". This is why Corder stated: 'every sentence is to be regarded as idiosyncratic until shown to be otherwise' (52).

It is also important to examine if a certain piece of learner language is deviant in correctness or in appropriateness. Correctness refers to rules of usage, while appropriateness refers to rules of language use.

Finally, there are two important facts that are mentioned by James: errors are harder to notice when they are on screen than when they are in printed form (91). In fact, he further stated that pointing out one's own errors is more difficult than doing so with other people's errors (91). This is why sometimes obvious errors are overlooked until somebody tells us about it and therefore, helps us to detect an error. A study carried out by Hughes and Lascaratou in 1982, determined that people can overlook errors where they should be obvious. This is the reason why in my research both the students and myself analyzed errors written or printed on paper, rather than on a computer screen. It is also the reason why students worked in groups to detect errors.

Error Description and Classification

This step is said to be a "comparison of the learner's idiosyncratic utterances with a reconstruction of those utterances in the target language" (54). Errors can be classified based on linguistic categories or they can have surface structure taxonomy. Linguistic categories make reference to the errors being



identified according to such linguistic categories as clauses, the auxiliary system, etc., and subcategories. Surface structure shows “the cognitive processes that underlie the learner’s reconstruction of the L2” (56).

Dulay, Burt, and Krashen established what is known as “Surface strategy taxonomy of error” in 1982. It is shown in the following table:

Table 5: Surface Strategy Taxonomy of Errors.

Category	Description	Example
Omissions	The absence of an item that must appear in a well-formed utterance	She sleeping.
Additions	The presence of an item that must not appear in well-formed utterances	We didn’t went there.
Misinformations	The use of the wrong form of the morpheme or structure	The dog ated the chicken.
Misorderings	The incorrect placement of a morpheme or group of morphemes in an utterance	What daddy is doing?

(Taken from Dulay, Burt, and Krashen 1982 cited by Ellis).

In addition, Corder cited by Ellis distinguished three types of error according to their systematicity. In order to identify these errors, learners need to be interviewed so that they can better explain their intentions.

1. Presystematic errors: When the learner does not know about the existence of a particular rule in the target language.
2. Systematic errors: When the learner discovers a rule but it is the wrong one.



3. Postsystematic errors: when the learner knows the correct target language rule but uses it inconsistently; for instance, the learner makes a mistake.

Explanation of errors

As cited by Ellis, “Explanation is concerned with establishing the source of the error”. This stage is the most important because it tries to show the processes accountable for L2 acquisition (57).

Taylor, cited by Ellis, determines that sources of error may be psycholinguistic, sociolinguistic, epistemic, or they may relate to discourse structure. Below is a table describing these sources.

Table 6: The explanation of errors according to its source.

Error source	Relevant to:
Psycholinguistic sources	The nature of the L2 knowledge system and the difficulties learners have in using it in production
Sociolinguistic sources	The learners’ ability to adjust their language in accordance with the social context.
Epistemic sources	The learners’ lack of world knowledge
Discourse sources	Problems in the organization of information into a coherent ‘text’.

(Extracted from Ellis 58).

Over the years, research has focused on the psychological part of explaining errors. In fact, as Abbot cited in Ellis (58), mentions that errors are classified more and more according to their psycholinguistic sources. They



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can be classified as competence 'errors', or performance 'mistakes'.

Competence errors are classified as transfer, intralingual, or unique.

In terms of intralingual errors, Richards, cited in Ellis (59), distinguishes the following subcategories of errors: overgeneralization, ignorance or rule restrictions, incomplete application of rules, and false concepts.

Selinker (Odlin 38) also discusses processes of error production. The processes he mentions are the following:

- Language transfer
 - Transfer of training
 - Strategies of second language learning
 - Strategies of second language communication
 - Overgeneralization

Below is a brief description of these processes. The first process is taken from the Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis, as already discussed. This is still accepted, with the clarification that there are other reasons for learners making errors. The second, transfer of training, can be described as "the influences that arise from the way a student is taught...while some influences from teaching are no doubt beneficial, others can induce errors that might not otherwise occur" (Odlin 38). The third, strategies of second language learning, refers to the strategies that learners use in order to overcome some deficiencies; to cite an example, simplification is a strategy (Johnson and Johnson 112). The fourth, strategies for second language communication, according to Selinker, are strategies that learners use when they make an effort to be understood, knowing that they what they have said is an error of transfer. Finally, overgeneralization is defined by Odlin as "the inappropriate application of a target language rule". For instance, students tend to write "*goed*" demonstrating how they internalize rules of the Target Language. For instance, the use of the definite article in proper names is appropriate in Spanish *la Paola*, meanwhile in English it is not correct. As mentioned by Johnson and Johnson, students learn a rule, and they want to repeat that pattern in any other situation.



2.7.2 Computerized Corpora of errors

James mentions the convenience of using a computerized corpus for language studies. Texts of different genres are collected from native speakers of English. This corpus is available online. It also has links to other corpora such as the TIME Corpus and the British National Corpus. These corpuses display thousands of words and phrases that are used authentically in different contexts. Things such as determining the frequency of words and searching for synonyms can also be done on these websites. In regard to language practice, many things can be done by teachers, researchers, and students, thanks to corpora of errors such as these. In fact it was used in this research and its use will be explained further ahead in the Results section of this thesis.

2.7.3 Other Factors that should be considered regarding errors

There are other important factors that should be considered regarding the errors that are made by learners and under what conditions they tend to happen. Below is a chart that names some. However, all factors such as these are beyond the scope of this thesis.

Table 7: Other factors that should be considered regarding errors

Factors	Description
A. Language	
Medium	Learner production can be oral or written
Genre	Learner production may take the form of a conversation, a lecture, an essay, a letter, etc.
Content	The topic the learner is communicating about
B. Learner	
Level	Elementary, intermediate, or advanced
Mother Tongue	The learner's L1
Language learning experience	This may be classroom or naturalistic or a mixture of the two.



2.7.4 Error Correction

After having discussed errors and the importance of carrying out error analysis, another important topic to be discussed is error correction. As was mentioned before, teachers have their own preferences when it comes to correcting their students. In fact, key topics like fluency and accuracy are not always given equal priority. One tends to be more emphasized than the other depending on teachers' beliefs. Many teachers prefer more communicative approaches and therefore they encourage their students to focus on fluency. However, there are times when students also need to be accurate. "This helps them to consolidate and improve their language". (Willis 8).

Concerning learners and how they like to be corrected, this tends to be very subjective, and it will depend on what is acceptable to the learners in their preferences. While some learners want to be corrected, others prefer their errors to be ignored, especially when their errors are oral. Willis mentions that there are learners that become demoralized when they have been corrected while speaking... "Many students say they won't risk speaking in or out of class because they are afraid of making mistakes or being corrected in public" (7). On the other hand, how correction takes place also depends on the teaching style or preferences of the 'corrector'. A teacher may be a native speaker, or a non-native speaker; consequently, each kind of teacher will have "different priorities for correcting, largely determined by their different perceptions of error gravity" (James 248).

Some situations mentioned by James in regard to correction are the following:

- Telling the learner that an error has been made and letting them discover and 'repair' it on their own.
- Providing the learner with the necessary information in order for him/her to acknowledge the error; however, the 'corrector' does not go into the causes of the problem.
- Providing the learners with the necessary information so as to realize why the error occurred. Learners would "devise their mental



representation of the rule” so that this error type would not recur. In other words, it is remediation (James 237).

Table 8: Types of correction according to (James 237) and (Harmer 69)

Incidental correction	The error is shown and therefore, corrected
Systematic correction	The learner is told what type of error it represents.
Providing:	
Positive evidence	Tells the learner what forms are used in the target language.
Negative evidence	Tells the learner what forms are not used in the target language.
Direct evidence	When a ‘knower’ of the language tells the learner that a certain form is not grammatical.
Indirect evidence	When the learner notices how things are said or used.
Showing incorrectness: (Harmer 69)	Repeating with a questioning intonation Echoing with a questioning intonation Denial Questioning: “ <i>Is that correct?</i> ”
Using Correction techniques:	Students correct students Teacher corrects students

(James 237 and Harmer 69; A.D)



Furthermore, James states that foreign language learners need more correction than second language learners (248). This is because second language learners have more access to indirect evidence because the target language is being used everywhere. This is not the same with foreign language learners, where their 'evidence' is mainly restricted to the classroom.

To conclude, it is thought that error correction has pros as well as cons; however, what is important is "to help learners to retain the right while rejecting the co-occurring wrong form" (James 241).

Table 9: Description of error correction terms of feedback according to Williams

In writing	Feedback on form Feedback on content	Errors are pointed out but not corrected Teacher's suggestions for improvements
Face-to-face	Student-Teacher Conferencing	Both work together to discover the root of errors. Questioning
Teacher and Student	Student-centered	Errors are labeled and left for students to discover on their own.

Taken from (Williams 1) Table 7 A.D

Providing students with feedback is an essential part of the teaching-learning process, and is a basic requirement for improving writing. In writing, feedback can be categorized in feedback on form, and feedback on content. In regard to form, it can be done with surface errors - errors that are pointed out but not corrected by the teacher (Williams TESL Journal). Feedback on content is in the form of a teacher's suggestions for improvements and comments that



will help rewrite a composition. Another form of giving feedback is by student-teacher conferencing (Chaudron 132). Both the teacher and the student can help each other discover the root of the errors made in a composition as stated by Williams, 'a chance to trace the causes of the problems arising from student writing and feedback, and to develop strategies for improvement' (Williams TESL Journal).

2.8 Topics of relevance to the Study

2.8.1 The importance of grammar instruction

There are two opposing views regarding the decision whether to give or not to give grammar explanations to students. Ortega mentions that for those that question the effectiveness of teaching grammar, there is a gap between the classroom and the outside world. What is taught may not necessarily be assimilated by the learners; in fact sometimes "what was learned through grammar explanations and conscious effort did not transfer well to spontaneous, idiomatic usage in real-world situations" (136). This is why children should learn a language as early as possible, so that they have a better chance of becoming familiar with the language and all its components.

In terms of opportunity, learners show a certain 'readiness' which show teachers that "learners will learn what they are developmentally ready to learn" (138).

Ortega states the following: "simply put, instructed learners progress at a faster rate, they are likely to develop more elaborate language repertoires and they typically become more accurate than uninstructed learners.

2.8.2 Interacting, noticing and processing.

Teachers can plan ways to approach learning problems. Students can work individually, in pairs or in groups. Teachers can 'modify' language so that it can be noticed. According to Lightbrown and Spada, "there are no cases of beginner-level learners acquiring a second language from native-speaker talk that has not been modified in some way" (43). This is true for the interaction hypothesis that states that interaction is an essential condition that should be met for second language acquisition. (Long qtd in Lightbrown and Spada 43).



They mention describe *modified interaction* as “interactional modification makes input comprehensible. Comprehensible input promotes acquisition. Therefore, interactional modification promotes acquisition” (43).

In addition, they describe *the noticing hypothesis*. This states that “nothing is learned unless it has been noticed”. Noticing becomes the starting point of acquisition (Lightbrown and Spada 44). Furthermore, Schmidt mentions a study performed on Portuguese students in which it was established that “second language learners could not begin to acquire a language feature until they had become aware of it in the input” (Schmidt qtd by Lightbrown and Spada 45).

2.8.3 Awareness-Raising in Foreign Language Teaching and Learning

The topic “Awareness-Raising” is one that is being mentioned in many EFL books, articles, on-line, and in print. As Thornbury mentions, “learners need to become aware of features of the target-knowledge base; they need to integrate this knowledge into their existing knowledge-base; they need to develop the capacity to mobilize these features under real-time conditions” (Thornbury 4).

Awareness-raising is a term that comes from Cognitivist theory (Thornbury 5). As Willis (16) mentions: “Activities aimed at promoting awareness of language form, making students conscious of particular language features and encouraging them to think about them are likely to be more beneficial in the long run than form-focused activities aimed at automating production of a single item”. Awareness-Raising is a term that reflects a new approach to teaching grammar. It was introduced by Sharwood-Smith in 1981. “The term ‘consciousness-raising’ (C-R) exists within the argument for or against an explicit calling of attention to form in foreign/second language pedagogy in light of current research and theories into the process of second language acquisition (SLA)” (Walsh 1).

The topic of awareness-raising has held the attention of many teachers who have felt the need of implementing new alternatives that invite the learners to notice certain grammar structures. James Ranalli, from the University of Birmingham carried out a study in 2001 involving two classes of upper-



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intermediate learners in a private language institute attached to the university. The main aims of the study were to find out what students preferred regarding instruction methods, and to collect and interpret their views about these preferences (Ranalli 6). Before the treatment, 83% of the participants said that they preferred 'deriving the rule for themselves from examples', while 17% said that they favored being given the rule first. It is important to mention that the term Consciousness-Raising (C-R) is sometimes used instead of Awareness-Raising. After the C-R treatment, 33% said that they would prefer to learn mostly by C-R. 28% said they would prefer to learn mostly by the deductive approach; and 39% said they would prefer a combination of the two (Ranalli 10). This showed that whatever the learning habits of students, they will tend to prefer the idea of learning things for themselves.

Hegglin-Besmer also carried out a study in 2001 titled "The Impact of Consciousness-raising Activities on a Mixed Level Classroom." He wanted to examine how he could integrate grammar in his mixed level classroom, making focus on form a part of the language learning experience of his classes. He also wanted to know how students would react to this new way of learning and in which ways they would profit. At the same time, he wanted to know how he would adapt to the new situation. The data was collected from 16-17 year-old students of his classroom in which he applied selected C-R activities that were related to their normal lesson plans. He describes each experience with the activities he applied in his classroom. He came up with the following conclusions (Hegglin-Besmer 11):

- Grammar could be integrated in a way in which it would be hard to tell if students were working on certain topic or on a grammatical theme.
- Students' reaction was constructive given the fact that beginners and advanced students were able to work together satisfactorily.
- Students' feedback was very helpful because the teacher perceived that they found the lessons more interesting.
- With this new approach, "grammar has no longer to be restricted by only employing mechanical exercises."



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In reference to the purpose of this research, I am going to make use of *error analysis* as the *research method* that will enable me to collect a “corpus of learner deviations” (Keith and Johnson 110). The knowledge of the errors found connects to the task-based approach because it will allow me to develop special *tasks*. These tasks will be the *Awareness-raising activities* that will be designed to improve the attention given to certain errors by means of *Didacticized-translation*. As will be seen, these all are concepts that are linked to each other.

Willis mentions the following consciousness-raising types (69):

- Identifying and consolidating patterns or usages
- Classifying items according to their semantic or structural characteristics
- Hypothesis building, based on some language data, and then perhaps checked against more data
- Cross-language exploration
- Reconstruction and deconstruction
- Recall
- Reference training

Teachers could try to raise awareness of different aspects of language, as is the case of grammar. By making use of the *consciousness raising grammar approach*, some considerations should be considered prior to its use. The first one is that it should “keep up the emotional involvement of the participants in topics and themes.” The second one is that students’ feedback should be given attention and that “other methods of grammar teaching should not be excluded.” The third one is that “awareness-raising should expand existing methods rather than replace them, thus making use of the students’ experiences of pre-established learning habits and rituals already present in the classroom” (Heggin-Besmer 4).

As mentioned by Ellis: “learners who are aware of a grammatical structure are more likely to notice it when they subsequently encounter it” (11). This could be the result of promoting grammar awareness-raising activities developed with the use of new resources that have been overlooked but could make a difference.

Autora:

Patricia Adriana Díaz Peralta



Awareness-raising is an important tool for language teaching. It makes learners reflect on the target language and therefore, notice things on their own. According to Willis, language teaching in the past showed a methodology that centered on the teacher. The methodology used by many teachers in the past is described as: “Listen to me and you will learn”. Now, the methodology based on analysis and Awareness-Raising says: “Be a creative learner. You have valuable experience of the language. Examine that and you will learn from it” (114).

Schmidt (qtd by Skehan 56) states that aspects such as attention, awareness, and control, have to do with consciousness in language learning. He suggests that “awareness enables more efficient solutions to the ‘matching’ problem noticing the gap between one’s current language system and the language one encounters. Schmidt also states the following:

- Awareness enables learners to better appreciate the instruction they are receiving, especially the correction that is being given.
- Awareness may also make it easier to transform and recombine material as the structure of material is more available, and other organizational possibilities become clear.
- Awareness may help learners operate the sort of dual-mode systems, where the learner/language user may need to combine rule-based systems during ongoing performance, and working memory may be the site where such orchestration occurs.

Ortega mentions that awareness has to do with attention. She states the following:

- The capacity of attention is limited
- Attention is selective
- Attention can be voluntary
- Attention controls access to consciousness (Ortega 138).

All in all, there are many reasons that awareness-raising should be given due importance in the learning of our students. It is my belief that the development of Didacticized activities, theoretically supported, along with a



task-based approach to EFL teaching, will enhance the interest and therefore the motivation of the learner, and will invite him/her to realize important aspects of grammar and make use of them when needed.

2.8.4 Awareness-raising in Task-based Learning

Awareness-raising activities are an alternative to deal with errors that are repetitive and are difficult for students to overcome. They play a role in the Task-Based Language approach to teaching. In other words, there is a pre-task, a task cycle, and language focus. (Willis 60).

By knowing what needs to be improved, a task-based approach would be ideal given the fact that this approach focuses specifically on developing tasks according to the needs of the students. It has three basic conditions for language learning, “exposure, use and motivation;” (Willis 40). Three conditions that will be present in the treatment of the errors found. Students will be exposed to the language while they use it meaningfully to the extent that they feel motivated because of the involvement they feel towards the task.

Another reason for choosing the Task-based approach to learning is the fact that “the teacher is involved in setting tasks up, ensuring that learners understand and get on with them,” and that where the focus is on form, “the teacher acts as a ‘language guide.” And it is here, where awareness-raising activities appear. As Willis mentions, “the process of consciousness-raising used in the TBL language focus activities encourages students to think and analyze, not simply to repeat and manipulate (Willis 40).

Willis also mentions ways students use and experience the task cycle:

- All three components (task, planning and report) are genuinely free of language control and learners rely on their own linguistic resources.
- The task supplies a genuine need to use language to communicate, and the other components follow on naturally from the task.
- In all three components language is used for a genuine purpose; there are outcomes to achieve for the task and the purpose of the drafting, rehearsal and practice at the planning stage is to help learners adjust their language for the report stage.



- The report allows a free exchange of ideas, summarizing learners' achievements.
- The planning stage encourages learners to consider appropriateness and accuracy of language form in general, rather than the production of a single form.
- There is a genuine need to strive for accuracy and fluency as learners prepare to 'go public' for the report stage; it is not a question of either accuracy or fluency at any one point in the cycle.

Moreover, applying the TBL framework means the learner will be exposed to a 'whole range of words, collocations, lexical phrases and patterns' other than language forms that the teacher intends to put a focus on.

2.8.5 Grammatical awareness-raising

As mentioned earlier, Awareness-Raising allows the learner to become aware of aspects of language in which it is necessary to place a focus on form. This is excellent for grammar. Grammar is an essential aspect of language; it states the rules by which words, phrases and sentences should be formed. Grammatical items tend to be taught at certain levels. As was mentioned before, there are different types of grammar. However, the aim of teaching grammar "should be to ensure that students are communicatively efficient with the grammar they have at their level...we should make sure that they use is what they know" (Harmer 23). Harmer also says "...language has to be acquired as a result of some deeper experience than the concentration of a grammar point" (34).

Oreto states that many highly fluent non-native English speaking students realize that although they use English in complex situations, they still make errors in grammar. This, according to Oreto, is due to the following reasons:

- They have stopped paying attention to their own grammar mistakes.
- They may not know that they are missing grammar structures; they may think that they are using a form correctly.
- They lack the fluency to handle the presentation or discussion a complex topic and the monitoring of grammar at the same time.



- They learned English primarily from interacting with native speakers, but with little feedback on errors (Oreto 1).

As teachers, we tend to teach grammatical items in an organized way; we teach structures, we give examples, we 'explain and present the grammar topic'.

However, there are many different ways of doing this which do not necessarily involve teaching grammar rules. Harmer mentions:

"...real language use is often untidy and cannot be automatically reduced to simple grammar patterns. Students need to be aware of this, just as they need to be aware of all language possibilities"...

"...it just means that they have to be aware of language and how it is used. That is why reading and listening are so important and that is why discovery activities are so valuable" (23).

Harmer's observation shows us that there should be other ways for teachers to accomplish grammar teaching goals. Teachers can prepare activities, they can teach grammar rules, or they can let students discover things on their own.

2.8.6 Use of L1 in the EFL classroom

Rodriguez and Oxbrow state: "The role of the mother tongue (L1) in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teaching contexts, as well as the use of translation as a language learning/teaching resource, have long been the subject of much controversy and academic debate in both Second Language Acquisition (SLA) research literature and professional teaching spheres, reflecting the constant fluctuations in language learning theory that have subsequently led to differing methodological prescriptions for classroom practice" (1).

Rinoluceri so succinctly reminds us in a recent publication, "the mother tongue is the womb from which the second language is born". (Rinoluceri qtd by Rodriguez and Oxbrow 2).

Students already have these connections and cell units because he/she already speaks a language and therefore has a great deal of 'recorded' experiences. This means that we should take advantage of this previous knowledge and reinforce it. Students do not learn 'from scratch', they already know a language. "Using the learner's mother tongue to explain certain



linguistic phenomena or certain words, promotes faster access to already existing neurological structures” (8).

In 1973 Butzkamm wrote an article in which with ‘convincing arguments’ he tries to show that completely monolingual environments (L2 use only), are counterproductive. He states that “metalinguistic explanations should be given in the learner’s mother tongue, in order to avoid making things more difficult for the students” (Butzkamm qtd by Marquardt 4). He also uses a term known as: “Reasonable Monolingualism”;

At present, a great number of EFL teachers around the world favor the policy of using English only in the classroom. However, the use of L1 in activities, such as the case of translation activities, can be highly beneficial. In fact, similarities and differences between the native language and the target language can be noticed (Rodriguez and Oxbrow 3). This way “features of input can become intake” (3).

Roberts shows the following benefits of including L1 in the EFL classroom (6):

- It reduces affective barriers to English acquisition and allows for more rapid progress to or in ESL.
- It facilitates the process of thinking in English.
- Allowing the use of L1 provides students with a sense of security...allowing them to express themselves while at the same time providing meaningful written material to work with.

In addition to the abovementioned benefits, there is another: L1 use helps feature of input become intake (Rodriguez and Oxbrow 3).

2.8.7 Didacticized translation

2.8.7.1 The value of Translation

Marquardt points out that even if the method of the teacher or the textbook has a monolingual approach, i.e. everything is presented in the L2, the learner still tends to make comparisons of both languages. Shiyab and Abdullateef state that translation can be utilized as a method of comparing and contrasting between two languages (3).

Autora:

Patricia Adriana Díaz Peralta



Marquardt mentions the following:

- Translation in foreign language teaching is inevitable.
- Students always want to use their mother-tongue in their system of second language learning and that is why they make errors.

It is in this situation, where teachers can make an important contribution to their students: given the fact that their recourse to their mother tongue is inevitable, perhaps this could be taken advantage of. In order to avoid errors caused by involuntary translation, translation exercises can be used.

Shiyab and Abdullateef mention the following: Since linguistics studies language contrastively and comparatively, translation can be utilized as a method of comparing and contrasting between two languages. They further state that there is an ongoing mental translation that learners rely on throughout their process of learning.

“Teachers and, university professors in particular, know this fact very well. They know, whether they like it *or not*, that language learners indirectly and unconsciously use the translation method for learning a language”. (6)

2.8.7.2 What is Didacticized Translation

Didacticized Translation is an Awareness-Raising method. It is a way to make students become aware of certain structures that they tend to show difficulties in. This form of Awareness-Raising activity was created by Marquardt in 1994. Didacticized Translation tasks allow learners to feel the need to notice key grammatical aspects in order to become aware of the differences between Spanish and English. By becoming aware of differences, students can become more accurate when writing or speaking a language. It has shown excellent results as a method of raising students' awareness concerning grammatical aspects that tend to cause errors.

Marquardt defines Didacticized Translation as follows: “the translation of a text specially prepared to raise students' awareness of certain grammatical structures and common expressions in L2...the objective of Didacticized-translation is the reduction of errors in the area of language interference (10).

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Didacticized Translation comes from the premise that “in order to avoid errors occurring in involuntary translation, translation exercises can be used.’ As mentioned by Shiyab and Adjullateef: “Translation should yield useful information as it brings up the similarities and differences between one language and another. It is in this particular way that translation facilitates and speeds up the learner’s comprehension” (4).

Marquardt carried out research in the fourth course at “Escola Corcovado” in Rio de Janeiro in 1994. The research showed that students, whose native language was Portuguese, had grammatical difficulties in certain structures in German, the language of study. After the “treatment” was applied to them, it was found that the students who made use of the Didacticized activities became more aware of the errors that were caused by interference. There was also a positive change in the students’ attitude and their grades in future tests improved considerably. “The analysis of the errors found in the tests showed that Didacticized-translation was a way to help students in the learning process” (Marquardt 12). This research was presented in the International Congress of German Teaching in Stanford, Ca. in 1995 and in Amsterdam, Holland, in 1997. Didacticized translation has been tried with Portuguese and Spanish speakers learning German.

In an experimental project conducted at Poznan University, Poland, Skowronski confirms that student groups at the English Department that were trained by translation techniques had better results in developing the skills of speaking and writing than the groups that did not use translation techniques. This shows that using translation is significant in the teaching of foreign language (Marquardt 12).

Because of its proven results, it will be applied in the qualitative study presented here of Spanish students learning English.

2.8.7.3 How translation should be carried out in Didacticized translation

Translation should be carried out from the target language (L2) to the native language (L1), in this case from English to Spanish. This is because students are evidently experts in their first language. In translating into the native language, the foreign text to be translated is the point of departure. That is, the



foreign text is the first thing the translator deals with and accounts for. Here, the translator runs into the problem of analysis. That is, the translator analyzes the text for the purpose of understanding it and perceiving the implicit and explicit shades of meaning behind it.

Translation is used as a way to raise students' awareness regarding errors that are commonly made. Without doubt, students feel more confident when it comes to using their own language; in this way they can focus on the structures in the target language.

According to Marquardt, students are given written texts previously prepared by the teacher, according to their level, for them to translate in pairs or in groups (10).

In general, by translating into their L1 they become aware of the fact that "literal translation" is not always possible...and exactly these "moments of awareness" were deliberately anticipated and created by the teacher, because the structures were prone to mistakes and constantly observable in the teacher's error analysis of students' texts appear in the Didacticized texts in the L2, to be translated into L1.

With this said, learners can use Didacticized Translation tasks as a way to become aware of L2 grammatical structures that were likely to be incorrect because of interference of the learners' L1.

2.8.7.4 Didacticizing texts

Jokes, anecdotes and short stories can be Didacticized. Marquardt states: "For our students, we can create texts with exactly the same grammatical structures that we want to emphasize."

2.8.7.5 Text layouts

Didacticized Translation texts can be presented in the following ways:

- 1). A translation can be placed along a side of the text
- 2). There can be space left for the text to be translated



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- 3). There can be space left for a third language, in the case of high schools that work with three languages

To conclude, it is important to mention that all the concepts that were discussed above were included due to their relevance to the topic of 'Awareness-Raising'. In order to continue with the research thesis, it is important to conclude with the definition of what is 'qualitative research'. According to Burneo, "qualitative research deals with detailed descriptions of situations, events, people, interactions and behaviors capable of being observed. It also incorporates what informants say, their experiences, attitudes, beliefs, thoughts and reflections" (Burneo 27).



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CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This thesis was developed in response to an evident need perceived as a high school English teacher of students whose native language is Spanish. As mentioned earlier, the aspect that I examine with this classroom-based research is the effectiveness of raising students' awareness of grammar difficulties with the use of Didacticized translation. The main aim is to help students with their common errors by focusing on form, making them become aware of differences between grammatical items in English and grammatical items in Spanish.

3.1 Participants

The class that is illustrated in the following study consisted of my own students during the school year of 2009-2010. I was the teacher of 18 students whose native language is Spanish. Their mean age was approximately 15. The participants were in their Fourth Course of high school. They were students of an All Girls high school known as '*Colegio Catalinas*'. The students had a good command of English; '*Catalinas*' high school is well-known for teaching English intensively, through the subject '*Language Structure*'. It also has an additional subject, '*Social Studies*', which uses the content-based approach for teaching the students North American history in English. However, their communicative abilities were greater than their ability to write accurately.

The participants of this classroom-based research were from the subject '*Language Structure*', a subject that teaches English by means of the Communicative Approach to Language Teaching, with an emphasis on sentence structures as well as fluency. Below are relevant data that better describe different factors associated with the research situation.

The participants of this study performed the normal tasks required by the syllabus that was proposed at the beginning of the academic year. I asked them, in addition to keep a journal so that they could write in it more or less after every two units. Also, they had a checklist of the errors that were found in each of the assignments that they were asked to do: compositions, journals, questions and answers, etc. These were updated every one or two units. As a teacher-researcher, I encouraged practice through the implementation of



normal classroom activities based on the syllabus of 'Language Structure', and I reserved some time to be left for the Awareness-Raising activities proposed in my thesis.

The text book the students were using throughout the school year was "English in Mind 3B"; written by Herbert Puchta. This text book was designed to suit the needs of teenagers. It was intended to match the interests, the age, and the abilities of the students. It had a strong focus on grammar and vocabulary. It was used together with a student work-book, extra resources, and a CD.

3.2 Research Steps

This project made use of qualitative research methods in order to describe the situation before and after the treatment was applied, the treatment being the raising of students' awareness of the common errors that tend to be made.

The development of this thesis followed certain steps that I will detail as follows:

Step 1:

In order to confirm the errors that tend to be repetitive for my students, it was necessary to assign written tasks in order to spot these errors. For this, they were asked to write three compositions; the first one was a 180-word student journal; and the other two were 180-word compositions done as class activities. One was titled 'How much you love your friends' and the other was a summary of the movie "Oliver Twist". These were collected for error analysis.

Step 2:

The common errors detected in the error analysis, became the starting point of my research project. It was interesting to notice that some errors were characteristic of this group of students, due to their background.

The common errors were analyzed according to their rate of occurrence and a chart was made indicating the common errors of my students. Errors were classified into four categories: omissions, additions, misformations, and disorderings. A Surface Strategy taxonomy of errors described by Dulay, Burt

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and Krashen cited by (Ellis 56) was used for classification. The data collected allowed me to make an in depth analysis of the errors caused by the influence of the students' mother tongue in writing activities.

Step 3:

Once the errors were noticed, Awareness- Raising activities, using the Task-based learning framework, were prepared so that they met the evident needs of correction. For this, I searched for short pieces of text that could be 'Didacticized', In other words, texts that were suitable for changes to be made in them.

Step 4:

The changes were made regarding the application of the grammatical topics that students demonstrated difficulty with. Jokes were the most appropriate for these tasks. I made use of an on-line corpus of English words and phrases, the "Corpus of Contemporary American English". This corpus displays tens of thousands of words in different authentic contexts. This helped me very much when preparing the Didacticized written texts. It showed me different possibilities using relevant grammar topics that applied to my students' situation. In my opinion, the displaying of authentic language is helpful for students as well as for teachers; in fact, I truly think that this is another way to raise students' awareness about certain grammar words or structures found in different genre. More information about this website is provided in the Annex section.

At this point I would like to mention the use of the Task-based part of the proposed activities:

Pre-task:

Samples of the errors were collected in order to show the teacher/researcher what errors are difficult to overcome. With this known, the students were given the instructions, students were grouped, roles were assigned.

Task cycle:

This was the actual work carried out in the classrooms through group work. Students identified the findings for activities one to four. At this point they were

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asked to organize their information with the intention of being prepared to present their findings to the whole class.

Language focus:

In this stage, students now practiced the grammar immersed in the findings that they were asked to present to the class. Because they had to present their findings, they had to focus on form, they had to listen to their team members, they had to write down their conclusions, and they had to be prepared to re-tell the joke to the whole class, using the grammar indicators that were worked with. As mentioned by Willis, “the process of consciousness-raising used in the TBL language focus activities encourages students to think and analyze, not simply to repeat, manipulate and apply” (136). Willis also mentions ways students use and experience the task cycle:

- All three components (task, planning and report) allowed students to use language freely and therefore, to rely on their own linguistic resources for the benefit of the group.
- The awareness-raising tasks made students use language to communicate.
- Students were given enough time to go over their findings and report them to the class.
- The development of the report allowed a free exchange of ideas,
- In the planning stage as well as the reporting stage, students had to consider appropriateness and accuracy of language form.

The four language skills were practiced and there was a need to focus on accuracy first, then on fluency. Students would first *read* the written texts together before translating, enhancing their vocabulary skills. In the instances when they were not familiar with certain words, they would ask each other for help, they would clarify certain terms, and they would then obtain the meaning of the word in order to obtain a correct translation. Students would be attentive when *writing down* their findings. The students knew that each group had to show the whole class the differences they found, and how things are structured in English. After the findings, the students were asked to prepare *to tell* the jokes to each other in the class. This was another type of “screening”, which meant that after the student became aware of the differences from English to

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Spanish that lead students to make errors, they had to be prepared to tell the joke to the class and therefore use the grammar structure not only when writing, but when speaking as well. This was done in the form of storytelling, which meant that they had to organize their information, explain through with their voice and their gestures, through the speed of their voice.

Finally, the listening part of these tasks was emphasized when the students would *listen to* each group explaining their findings and telling each group's jokes.

Step 5 Material was collected after the application of the awareness-raising activities. Students were the ones responsible for reporting the differences they found between the two languages by means of translation. Since the intervention was not immediately measurable, there was a description of the impact on their performance thereafter.

Step 6 Error analysis was carried out on the material collected in step 5, in a similar way to that in step 2. The errors noted and their analysis after the Didacticized-Translation tasks will be explained in detail in the subsequent pages of this analysis.

3.3 Additional data collected

Notes were taken at all times. Important notes, reminders, and observations were written down in the form of a teachers' journal. It was also important to write down important comments and opinions extracted from informal interviews with the students. My Observations during class were also included in this thesis research.

In addition, photographs were taken, and a short video was recorded of the students working on their activities.

3.4 Other Instruments used

Data was also collected through the following data collection instruments:

- Direct observations forms
- Students' notebooks. To keep track of the errors that have greater tendency of being made, by means of reviewing their journals, their class work and their compositions.



- Questionnaires (described in detail below)
- Collecting students' responses to the assigned worksheets for the Awareness activities.
- A student error list

3.4.1 Questionnaires

Because questionnaires and surveys have the advantage of being easier and less time-consuming than interviews, respondents were able to report on their views, and their beliefs. They stated them through a questionnaire given out on them, it sought to find out how much students really make use of Spanish when they learn English. Another questionnaire was given to teachers, in order to find out how much teachers use Spanish in their class.

Finally, I decided to collect data in order to verify if the study had aided my students' learning and my teaching practices. These areas were the following:

- Students' opinions about how the use of Spanish impacted their confidence to learn and communicate in English after having received an alternative treatment for dealing with common errors.
- Students' opinions about their having better or more appropriate beliefs and attitudes towards the use of learners' MT when learning and studying English after their participation in this study;
- Students' opinions about the effect of these activities with regard to their speaking skills.
- Students' opinions about the inclusion of the activities they received in this study as a normal element of an English class.
- Students' recommendations to improve the appropriateness or effectiveness of this type of studies.



**CHAPTER FOUR
RESULTS**

This chapter presents the data collection over the course of the study.

4.1 The following table describes the factors considered when collecting learner language samples.

Table 10: Factors considered when collecting samples of learner language

Factors	Description
A. Language	
Medium	The activities were in written form
Genre	They were written compositions
Content	Journal; student composition “how much you love your friends”; and the summary of the movie “Oliver Twist”.

B. Learner	
Level	They are in fourth course, in an advanced level
Mother Tongue	Spanish
Language learning experience	Classroom. First time use of Spanish in the classroom

Extracted from

(Ellis 49)

To begin with, my students kept a list of errors at the back of their notebooks; it was updated about every two months, and it showed the following:

Error	Correction
<i>I finished all of my homeworks</i>	<i>I finished all of my homework.</i>

As one can see, the students wrote the sentences that were erroneous, and next to them, their corrected version. This was done on a normal basis before the error treatment that I proposed. This was carried out from the beginning of



the school year until the month of May. This shows that although there was an ordinary way for treating the errors of my students, my students kept making the same errors.

4.2 The following table shows the errors that were found before the treatment that was given to them for these errors; they were classified according to grammatical indicators.

Table 11: Surface strategy taxonomy of errors collected from my students

Category	Indicator	Common Error	
Omissions	Pronouns	Is important to have good friends.	
		Φ Lives in Cuenca.	
		Φ Other problem.	
	Possessive pronouns	She lives in your world...	
		He left with your friend	
	Auxiliaries	You know where the boy is?	
		He no listened to the director.	
		Prepositions	She broke Φ with her boyfriend
			She should take care Φ her son
			I listen music
		He looked the baby	
	Collocations	Forty years...	
Additions	Definite article	<u>The</u> money is not the only happiness	



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		<u>The</u> Mr. Johnson is coming.
	Auxiliaries	I am agree with you
	Verbs	He goed to school
		He didn't went there.
		Call to your brother
		Ask to your teacher
	Say/tell	He said her hello
		He said her he felt sad.
		He told to the boy that he couldn't eat...
	Nouns	Mens
		Womens
		Childrens
		Homeworks
		Our teachers give us a lot of advices
		We came to the downtown
		We stay at the home on weekends
		She goes to the work until 6
Misformations	Prepositions	My sister is married with a lawyer



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		She makes us to do too much homeworks.
		My sister is in love of her boyfriend
		She drinks a pill every two nights.
		I stay at the home on weekends
	Pronouns	She gave he some food.
		I am agree with she.
	Verbs	I put angry
		I am agree with she.
		I have scare
		He go to school.
Misorderings	Adjectives	A girl very nice
		The bigs trees
	Time expression	Ago three months

Comments and findings generated from the groups of students that participated in the treatment are presented in Table 12. They are grouped according to each indicator.



4.3 Table 12: Students' Findings during the Treatment.

Indicator	Findings
Pronouns	In Spanish, the subject is included in the verb, whereas in English you need a pronoun: ' <i>I have</i> '= <i>Yo tengo</i>
	Some pronouns go after verbs, for instance: ' <i>I knew her</i> ', ' <i>I appreciate them</i> '.
Say and tell	Say and tell are words that are used differently. We say ' <i>say to me</i> ', or ' <i>tell me</i> '.
Nouns	Nouns can be countable and uncountable. (one radio, sugar, homework, advice, etc).
	The word 'assignments' can be used instead of saying ' <i>homeworks</i> '.
	Nouns can be regular (chair; door, etc); and irregular: (men; children, etc.); Irregular nouns cannot be pluralized as regular nouns.
Prepositions	Two words in English form one word in Spanish: <i>woke up</i> ; <i>dreamt about</i> ; <i>handed in</i> , etc.
	After a preposition, the next verb is always in the form as a gerund. For example, after ' <i>by telling</i> ', ' <i>for asking</i> ', ' <i>good at playing</i> ', etc.
	Prepositions beside certain words change the meaning of the word.
	Prepositions can have different meanings depending on the verb.
	English has a lot of prepositions. The meaning of a verb completely changes depending on the preposition. (<i>Look for</i> , <i>look</i>



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	<i>at, look into, etc).</i>
	English has many phrasal verbs: (<i>break up, find out, grow up, etc.</i>
	The preposition 'in' is used for: years, months, phrases such as ' <i>in order to, In 1980, In July, etc.</i>
Adjectives	In English sometimes the adjective goes before the noun: <i>poor man; a tough time; sick children; elderly women; close attention; large car, etc.</i>
	Adjectives are not countable.
	When adjectives are compared they follow different rules depending on if they have one syllable or more (large, larger)...there are also irregular ones.
	There is a possessive adjective for every person, in Spanish the word 'su' can be used for ' <i>I, you, he, she, it, and they</i> '.
	The words ' <i>this</i> ' and ' <i>these</i> ' do not mean the same. One is for singular, the other is for plural.
Verbs	A large group of verbs are formed by two words, some also need auxiliaries that are not used in Spanish. (<i>Do you speak English = Hablas Inglés; Did you know...?</i>)
	Some verbs are not translated the same in Spanish; for example ' <i>I am hungry</i> ' means ' <i>yo tengo hambre</i> '.
	There are different tenses and they depend on how and when things are said.
	There are different uses for the word 'get': ' <i>get used to, get in, get on, get into, etc.</i>
	We use auxiliaries in questions and negative statements, but



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	never in affirmative statements: <i>'Do you live in Cuenca? 'I don't live in Cuenca'.</i>
Collocations	Most things are expressed differently and do not have a literal translation: <i>I am afraid= me parece; 'don't even give it a second thought'; 'Oh dear'; to pay close attention; 'I like hunting' = Me gusta cazar; On Monday = El lunes; 'You are 40 years old = Tu tienes 40 años; stay home.</i>
	Some nouns go with certain prepositions like: <i>'On weekends', 'at home', 'at work', etc.</i> It is good to memorize them.
	There are some things that are naturally said in English and they can be incorrect because of one preposition, for example, we say <i>'go in a car', not 'go on a car';</i>
	We do not say * <i>'I am agree with you', we say 'I agree with you'. We do not say * 'married with' we say, 'married to'.</i>
	English has more words than Spanish for saying the same thing: <i>'Piensalo'= 'Think about it'.</i>
Word order	Sentences cannot be translated word by word: <i>steps next to him; drinks it all down; sitting at a bar; does not; asking for; waiting for; by studying; arrive at;</i>
	The word <i>'ago' is always placed</i> at the end of a sentence, and <i>'since', is from certain period of time.</i>
Zero article	A noun does not have 'the' before it when it is referring to something in general and not specifically. General: <i>'Children play games'; Specific: 'The children of the neighborhood played baseball'.</i>
	Although some places are said with the article <i>'la'</i> in Spanish, in English they are not; for example: <i>'La China'= China; 'El</i>



	<i>Ecuador'= Ecuador</i>
Others	<p>Days of the week go with 'on' instead of with 'the' as in Spanish.</p> <p>The exact time on the dot, is said with 'o'clock'.</p> <p><i>How many</i> is not the same as <i>how much</i>.</p> <p><i>Twice</i> is two times.</p>

4.4 Perceived results after the treatment

The following table presents the results after the treatment as perceived by the teacher-researcher.

Table 13: Rating Scale

Groups: ALL

Activity: Four Didacticized-Translation activities.

Level of Achievement:

Rating scale				
0	1	2	3	4
No evidence of achievement	Poor evidence of achievement	Weak evidence of achievement	Good evidence of achievement	Full evidence of achievement



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Criteria:

Ss compared and analyzed key grammar aspects	1	2	3	<u>4</u>
Inferences were analyzed and discussed	1	2	3	<u>4</u>
The four language skills were combined	1	2	3	<u>4</u>
Comprehension was improved	1	2	3	<u>4</u>
Ss realized that there is no exact equivalent for every grammar aspect.	1	2	3	<u>4</u>
Differences between both languages helped identify common grammar errors	1	2	3	<u>4</u>
Ss showed interest through their questioning	1	2	3	<u>4</u>
Ss found answers to their questioning	1	2	3	<u>4</u>
Ss showed a positive change in their communicative abilities.	1	2	3	<u>4</u>



4.5 The following table summarizes the results of the first student questionnaire.

Table 14: Summary of first student questionnaire results

QUESTIONS	YES	%	NO	%
1. Did the student's ability and confidence to learn improve after the treatment?	12	67%	6	33%
2. Did the student show more confidence when communicating?	14	78%	4	22%
3. For the student, was this a new way of treating errors?	18	100%	0	
4. Was the treatment engaging for the student?	18	100%		
5. Now that they have become aware of certain errors, do you think that they communicate better?	14	78%	4	22%
6. Did their writing skills improve?	14	78%	4	22%
7. Did their speaking skills improve?	14	78%	4	22%
8. Were they receptive for more of these activities to be done in class?	18	100%	0	
9. Did their beliefs towards the use of Spanish when learning English increase?		89%	2	11%
10. Did they have recommendations?	0		18	100%



4.6 The following table summarizes the results of the second questionnaire given to the students.

Table 15: Summary of second student questionnaire results.

QUESTIONS	OPTIONS	f	%
1. During your learning experience, have you ever had teachers who established an “English Only Policy” in the classroom?	Yes _____	13	72
	No _____	5	28%
If your answer was “Yes”, indicate what percentage of your teachers did so	0%	2	11%
	10% -20%	6	33%
	20% – 40%	1	6%
	40% - 60%	5	28%
	60%-80%	2	11%
	80%-100%	2	11%
Please indicate when:	School	4	22%
	High school	14	78%
2. During your learning experience, have you ever had teachers who would use Spanish in class?	Yes	6	33%
	No	12	67%
3. If the answer of the previous question was YES, please explain in what instances:	At beginning levels	3	17%
	At advanced levels	8	44%
		7	39%



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	At all levels		
	Strictly at times when it is needed		
In what situations?	Explaining difficult terms	10	56%
		4	22%
	Explaining grammar	3	17%
	Checking students' comprehension		6%
	Teaching vocabulary	1	6%
	Other reasons		
4. As a student, do you think that the use of Spanish was advantageous or disadvantageous? Why?	FREE RESPONSES		
5. As a student how do you feel you learn better:	When you can use Spanish freely?	2	11%
	When you can use Spanish only when it is strictly necessary?	12	67%
	When you use only English at all times?	4	22%
6. When you learn vocabulary (While reading or in teacher's explanations), do you ever translate new words in Spanish?	Yes	14	78%
	No	4	22%
7. When you learn a new grammar topic,	Yes	14	78%



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in order for you to understand, do you compare it to something that exists in Spanish?	No	4	22%
8. If you responded 'yes' to the previous question, how helpful is this for you?	A little helpful	3	17%
	Very helpful	14	78%
	Extremely helpful	1	6%
9. Can you say that you are capable of leaving Spanish aside, in your English lessons?	Yes	4	22%
	No	14	78%
10. Do you think the use of Spanish in the classroom helps you learn English more effectively?	Yes	9	50%
	No	9	50%
11. What do you prefer:	...Your teacher to use English only in the classroom?	8	44%
	...Your teacher to use Spanish only when it is necessary?	10	56%



4.7 The following table summarizes the results of the questionnaire given to 9 EFL Teachers.

Table 16: Summary of questionnaire for EFL teachers results

QUESTIONS	OPTIONS	F	%
1. Have you ever noticed that your students consistently tend to make the same errors and that despite correction, they continue to do so?	Yes	8	89%
	No	1	11%
2. Have you ever considered using Spanish as a means to try to correct these errors?	Yes	6	67%
	No	3	33%
3. Do you personally allow Spanish in the classroom?	Yes	9	100%
	No	0	
4. Does the place where you work allow the use of L1 in your EFL teaching?	Yes	3	33%
	No	6	67%
5. Do you use Spanish in your classes to some degree?	Yes	8	89%
	No	1	11%
Please describe in what percentage?	0%	1	11%
	10% -20%	8	89%
	20% – 40%		
	40% - 60%		
	60%-80%		
	80%-100%		
6. If the previous answer was YES, please explain in what levels:	At beginning levels	2	22%
	At advanced levels		



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	At all levels Strictly at times when it is needed	7	78%
In what situations?	For explaining difficult terms	6	67%
	For explaining grammar	1	11%
	For checking students' comprehension	2	22%
	For teaching vocabulary	3	33%
	Other reasons:	FREE RESPONSE	
8. Would you use Translation from English to Spanish, as a means to help students become aware of certain grammar structures?	Yes	6	67%
	No	3	33%
9. Have you ever used Spanish to explain or contrast grammar points?	Yes	4	44%
	No	5	56%



4.8 The following table summarizes the results of the student interviews.

Table 17: Summary of student interview results

Question 1	How has your teacher corrected the errors that were made in your English classes in the past?
Answer	<i>“Our teacher in the past corrected our error just with a red pen and with symbols or letters. For example WW, (wrong word), but we don’t know what the correct word should be, we do not know the correction”.</i>
Question 2	Have you ever done something like what was done in class, with other teachers?
Answer	<i>“No, we never use Spanish in class, we never use translation or something to make us understand the correction”.</i>
Question 3	How helpful has the Didacticized-translation been for your learning?
Answer	<i>It is more important to do activities than only study grammar because we work in groups we help each other and then our teacher confirms what we noticed.</i>
Question 4	What were the difficulties you found when you were doing these activities?
Answer	<i>Sometimes it was difficult to translate some words but because we worked in a group we help each other.</i>

The following shows the teacher interview questions.



4.9 Summary of Teacher’s interview results

Question 1	How do you treat common errors?
Question 2	When do you use Spanish in class?

The following are summaries of interviews with three EFL Teachers of Catalinas high school.

Cristina Terreros, is an English Teacher for Fourth Course of *Bachillerato General* at Catalinas high school. She was born in Ecuador and learned English in the United States. She stated that she gives her students a list of correction symbols that informs the student that something was erroneously written. In regard to the second question, she does not agree with excluding the students’ native language because it is impossible for them to ignore the language they already know.

The second teacher that was interviewed was Magali Arteaga, an Ecuadorian EFL Teacher for Second course of high school at Catalinas. She was born in Ecuador and learned English in a Canadian exchange program that she went to when she was 18. She said that in her classes she *never* uses Spanish, except for when she teaches her students the Passive Voice; since this grammar topic may be difficult for students to understand, and by using Spanish, they are able to *notice the differences between each*. In regard to the way she deals with the errors of her students, she stated that she uses worksheets and exercises that she downloads from useful websites from the Internet.

Diana Calderon was the third teacher that was interviewed. She is a North American EFL Teacher who has lived in the U.S for almost all her life; she has lived in Ecuador since 2001. It is important to mention that she has a native North American accent, and her Spanish is not quite as natural. Her response to the first interview question was that she uses drills and she *always* corrects students on the spot, before their errors become persistent. In regard to the second question, she says that she *‘never ever’* uses Spanish in her classes; it is totally forbidden for her students because they “need to be exposed to



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English as much as they can”, and because “they tend to get used to it and take advantage of it”.



CHAPTER FIVE

ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

Below is an analysis of the data collected throughout the process of this research. It is presented through descriptions of relevant situations, events, interactions with the students, and the important findings that were observed. Each set of findings is arranged in an order that will best describe the situations taken place during this research work. An analysis of learners' errors, a data observation form, surveys and interviews to both teachers and students is presented.

5.1 Errors and findings collected from my students

In English there are some grammar features that are absent in Spanish, and in Spanish there are grammar features that are absent in English. At this point it is appropriate to remember Dulay, Burt, and Krashen's Surface Taxonomy of errors, which classifies errors in four categories. According to them, errors can be caused by: Omissions, Additions, Misformations, and Misorderings (56).

Accordingly, I would like to mention the errors found in the samples collected by the students and my analysis of them. Concerning the category 'Omissions', the "the absence of an item that must appear in a well-formed utterance" (Ellis 56), we can see in Table X that the collected samples of language showed errors regarding the following indicators: pronouns, prepositions, and collocations.

- "Φ Is important to have good friends".
- "Φ Was Monday morning..."
- "Φ Lives in Cuenca".

Apparently, this error shows that the Spanish rule has been internalized due to its similarity with Spanish. Despite knowing the grammar rule, they showed that they use their mother tongue as a starting point.

One of the findings from a group showed the following:



“Although in Spanish we say: ‘Era Lunes por la mañana’, there is no need to include the subject pronoun in the verb because the pronoun is already included in the verb”.

This is what I told the group:

T: Now that you have noticed this, keep listing all of the differences you see in the text between English and Spanish”

Another of the participants responded:

S= “In Spanish, we do not need to write the pronoun ‘It’ because no translation exists. In English we have to because if we don’t the sentences will be like a question”. (Results, table 3).

In addition to this, my students tended to get confused when they needed an object pronoun, thinking that subject and object pronouns are used in the same way:

- ‘She fed he some food’ = Le di un poco de comida

My students tended to erroneously use subject pronouns after verbs when clearly there is a difference in the use of both.

I was able to notice that in the past my students were inclined to make this type of error, and it did not get eliminated by normal means of correction. In fact, syntactically and morphologically pronouns can cause confusion among English learners because sometimes they are not needed in Spanish, whereas in English they need to be included in order to be more specific. Below is an example that illustrates this error:

- ‘I said he I have Φ boyfriend’ = Le dije que tenia novio.

To continue, another very frequent error of my students was regarding the omission of auxiliaries. Some students ignored the use of auxiliaries in negative sentences as well as in questions as in the following examples:

- ‘He no listened to the Director’ = El no escuchó al Director
- ‘You know where the boy is?’ = Sabes dónde esta el niño?



As is shown in the examples, when these sentences are translated into Spanish, there is in fact no need for auxiliaries.

The next indicator to be analyzed is prepositions. Since every group of students is unique in their learning backgrounds and their learning situations, prepositions were a major problem for my students. In fact, I believe that the level of my students made this error more noticeable than it would have been for other groups of learners with perhaps a lower level of English. Native English has a vast amount of prepositions that are reflected in the ordinary lexicon. Their use shows a 'native-like' style among learners of English as a foreign language. Below are some examples taken from a student's composition and the movie summary:

- I listen Φ music
- He looked Φ the baby

The difference between Spanish and English lies in the fact that in Spanish, only one word is needed to express a verb, such as: *escuchar*, whereas in English, a verb and a particle is needed, for instance: (*listen + to*). This was an error that was difficult for my students to overcome because they had internalized the Spanish grammar rule and applied it to English. The same happens in: * *He look the boy = el miró al niño*. Students forget that 'look' goes along with the preposition 'at', they internalize the Spanish pattern. Moreover, in the following sentence, we can see that one student wrote the following:

- 'My mother made dinner the 24th of December'.

The correct form of this sentence would be

√ 'My mother made dinner on the 24th of December'.

In a situation such as this one, students need to know that before dates, or days, we use the preposition 'on'. This rule showed itself when the students translated the following sentence extracted from the Didacticized Translation activity IV, Exercise, 'English idioms relating to time', numeral 5:

'On Sundays, I always go to church' = Los domingos, siempre voy a misa



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Below are other findings of my students:

“In English there are more words to say something than in Spanish”.

“English is full of prepositions!”

“Two words in English say one verb in Spanish”.

“We must say ‘look at’ and not only ‘look’; ‘listen to’ and not only ‘listen’”.

Although these are aspects that are evident for teachers, we cannot assume that they are totally assimilated by our students. If aspects such as these had been understood, students would not continue showing errors when writing or speaking. Comments such as these showed me that they became aware of characteristics such as these by means of noticing differences between English and Spanish. They showed a considerable improvement in their communicative abilities.

As we saw earlier, not only can prepositions be erroneously omitted, they can also be categorized as ‘misformations’. This error was also characteristic among my students given the fact that they have a wider word repertoire which enables them to use numerous verbs plus prepositions as well as phrasal verbs. Students tend to make errors such as:

- ‘...My sister is married with a lawyer’.
- ‘...She was in love of her boyfriend’.

Besides the previous findings, students also became aware of the need to use gerund forms *after* a preposition, a verb plus preposition, or a phrasal verb. This was truly useful and this aspect dramatically reduced the errors that were seen before the treatment. The following example is taken from the Didacticized text IV: (English idioms relating to problems/difficulties; numeral 3):

“This is another way of saying we will deal with that problem when it occurs”.

Mainly, with their attention being focused on the topic of ‘prepositions’, they started to understand the collocational aspect characteristic to all prepositions, in other words, what preposition goes hand-in-hand with which verbs.



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Regarding collocations, an error common to them before the treatment, was to adapt the Spanish way of mentioning age, for instance:

- 'My mother is forty years'.

The correct form that they ignored before was: 'My mother is forty *years old*'. My students were able to notice this difference when they translated this sentence. One student said:

"we cannot say 'cuarenta años viejo', we just say 'cuarenta años'".

At this point I would like to mention the Taxonomy of Errors category 'Additions'. To begin this category, I will start with Definite Articles. We know that in English, definite articles are not used when speaking generally, they are used, however, when we refer to something specific. The following is taken from the sample:

- 'The childrens were very scare'.

From this example we can observe three interference errors. Clearly we can see that this student is trying to say: '*Los niños estaban asustados*'. This demonstrates that my students tend to rely on their native language structures to produce a sentence. However, I was pleased to see that the following Didacticized text precisely covered this topic:

English: Children who are as good as gold are obedient and well-behaved'.

Spanish: 'Los niños que son tan buenos como el oro son obedientes y bien comportados'. (Didacticized-Translation IV; Comparisons, numeral 3)

This leads me to believe that my students noticed that in order to say the previous sentence in Spanish, the article 'the' was needed = '*los niños*', although in English the same noun is said without an article = 'Φ Children'. This grammar aspect was reinforced in other sentences from the Didacticized-Translation IV, such as the following:

'All roads lead to Rome' = 'Todos **los** caminos conducen a Roma'.

'Honesty is the best policy'. = '**La** honestidad es la mejor política'.

Another error referring to definite articles found in class is when my students tend to literally translate the use of the Spanish article "el, la" included in



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proper names. For example: *'toys are manufactured in the China'*. Students are thinking in the Spanish version as: *'los juguetes se manufacturan en la China'*.

I would like to mention that while I was walking around the classroom from group to group, I was listening to my students' commenting among themselves, confirming their understanding of this important grammatical difference, which is conducive to many errors. Apparently, although they had been corrected by their teachers using the traditional red pen and circling the error itself, it is only now that they have truly understood the reasoning behind this error.

To continue with this category, I would like to discuss the indicator 'Auxiliaries', precisely in the case of the verb phrase that was many times used erroneously: *'I am agree'*. This error was found in my students when they spoke and when they wrote. When my students translated the Didacticized-Translation II, numeral 2, there was the following sentence that was intentionally prepared for them to notice the difference: 'Yup, I agree with you'... 'they are my in-laws'.

Which in Spanish translates to: *'Si, estoy de acuerdo contigo...son mis suegros'*. A finding noticed by students was that the verb 'am' is not needed in English.

Continuing with the category 'Additions', now I would like to comment on the indicator 'Verbs'. From the following sentences we can observe that students tend to add their own morphemes and apply Spanish rules to English sentences as much as possible:

- 'He goed to school'.
- 'He didn't went there'.

Here we can see that in the first sentence, 'he goed' reflects a rule in English generalized in a verb that is irregular. In the second sentence we can see that this student is thinking in Spanish: *'No se fue allá'*. This error was treated in Didacticized-Translation IV, numeral 2:

'She went up the stairs and stopped'.



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Once my student came upon this sentence, she had to stop and think how she would translate the verb 'went'. Here they were able to notice that 'went' was next to the subject 'She'.

Another error found concerning the indicator 'Verbs', is the extra preposition that is erroneously added in verbs in English:

'Call to your brother'.

In fact there are two errors that can be identified from this sentence. First, there is a preposition that follows the verb '*call*', this student writing 'call to', and second, the word 'your' is erroneously being used to show possession, the proper word that should be used is 'her'. Another example taken from the sample of errors my students produced was '*ask to*'; '*told to*'; there is an extra preposition being unnecessarily included. This is understandable given the fact in English that some prepositions are included in the sentence while sometimes they are not. However, it is when they translated the Didacticized text that they became aware that things are not literally translated as they think they are. Verbs were specifically placed in the Didacticized texts in order to reinforce their awareness. Also, the verbs that required special attention were the verbs 'say' and 'tell'. From the students' journals, the following was extracted:

- 'She say me that I am her best friend'.
- 'I told to her many things'.

Here we can see that the verbs *say* and *tell* are being erroneously used. This, in fact was an error that was persistent, and that I noticed my students benefited from thanks to the treatment. While I was moving around from group to group I was able to notice groups demonstrating their understanding through the following comments:

"I always thought you can use anyone in the same way'.

"If you use 'say', you use it with its structure, if you use 'tell', you use it with its structure...

"We cannot say 'say me'".



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As a researcher, I was able to notice that after the treatment, they showed a noticeable improvement when using both verbs. Verbs such as call, tell, say, ask something, ask for something, etc., were worked with, all of which can be seen in the Annexes section assigned for the Didacticized translation activities.

At this point I would like to refer to the indicator 'Nouns'. We know that in English while some things are pluralized, others are not. For example, the word 'students', versus the word 'children'. We can see why it is easy for students to think that the word 'children' can be 'childrens', or the error that in my opinion was mostly persistent, the word 'homeworks', where students would ignore that we say 'homework', and that although in Spanish we say *deberes* for plural, we must say 'assignments' in English. To cite other persistent errors, we have the nouns: 'womens', and 'mens'. Another error collected from the sample was the use of the word 'downtown'.

Students erroneously said '*We came to the downtown high school*' = *Vinimos al colegio del Centro*. Finally students were made aware of this persistent error that did not achieve optimal results through normal means of correction. Here is a sentence extracted from the Didacticized-Translation IV, Idioms relating to ambition, numeral 3:

"I am Sonia. I live *downtown Cuenca* which means, I am near everything". = Soy Sonia. Vivo en el centro de Cuenca, lo que quiere decir que estoy cerca de todo.

To conclude the category 'Additions', I would like to mention the following errors found in the sample:

- 'We stay at the home on weekends'
- 'She goes to the work until 6 pm.'

The collocational aspect of certain grammar features in English reminded my students that things cannot be literally translated from English to Spanish. There is a redundant definite article. This error was given attention to precisely in the Didacticized-Translation Part II exercise 2: "The married couple". We have such examples as 'on weekends', 'at home', 'agree with', 'angry at', etc; all of which help students to focus their attention of these common errors. Although this



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error seemed easy to explain to my students, for some reason in the past, their native language version was imposed.

Now, I would like to mention the category 'Misformations'. According to Dulay, Bury and Krashen, a misformation occurs with "the wrong form of the morpheme or structure.

Regarding the indicator 'prepositions', my students tend to generalize the use of certain prepositions. For example, certain prepositions next to a verb would not be appropriate in English, but it would reflect a literal translation made in Spanish. Although this error did not cause communication problems, it lacked grammatical accuracy. As an example for this indicator, we can see the following:

- 'My sister is married with a lawyer'.
- 'My sister is in love of her boyfriend'.

Here we can see that although these sentences are comprehensible, this student has internalized their ways of being said in Spanish.

To continue, the next indicator is 'Pronouns'. Not only do they tend to be omitted by my students, they tend to use subject pronouns instead of object pronouns, something acceptable in Spanish, but not in English. These examples were taken from the summary of the movie.

- 'She gave he some food'= Le dió un poco de comida
- I am agree with she'= estoy de acuerdo con ella.

This error was also treated in Didacticized-Translation II, numeral 2.

The next indicator is 'Verbs'. Apparently students demonstrated a direct link to their mother tongue and how certain things are said. For instance:

- 'she put angy = 'se puso braba'
- 'I am agree with she'= estoy de acuerdo con ella;
- 'I have scare' = tengo miedo
- 'he go to school' = se va a la escuela.



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Regarding these sentences, this is a confusing aspect that students must understand. Again, it was when they performed the Didacticized-Translation that they became aware of these errors by means of identifying the differences between English and Spanish. Students made the following comments:

S1= “angry goes with the verb get...get angry”.

S2= “scared goes with the verb ‘am’”...I am scared.

S3= “we need to write the correct tense for each sentence”.

At last we have the category ‘Misorderings’. Here we can take into consideration the use of adjectives and their relevance to my students’ situation. It seems that my students tend to change positions of adjectives; they also tend to make errors in regard to pluralization and gender. Following are some examples found in my students’ written tasks:

- ‘A girl very nice’ = ‘una niña muy buena’.

Students were made aware that this cannot be translated word by word. In Spanish it is correct to use the adjective after the noun; however, in English it is used before the noun. Also, they were made aware that adjectives cannot be pluralized as they can be in Spanish.

- ‘we were very importants’ = ‘eramos bien importantes’

Also, another problem with students’ writing had to do with word order. In fact, even though some things are said in the same word order, others are not. I would like to cite the following example:

‘*three months ago*’, is said as ‘hace tres meses’. However some of my students would write sentences starting with the word *ago*:

- ‘...Ago three months’.

To conclude this section regarding the analysis of my students’ errors, I would like to mention that some grammatical aspects were also included such as:

There is vs. There are

This is vs. These are

How much vs. how many

Gerunds vs. infinitives



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In addition to this, special grammar forms were included in order to raise my students' awareness of lexical errors, as well. For instance, many students translated: '*large car*', as '*carro largo*'. This was a happy moment for me as a Teacher/Researcher, because I was able to deal with this misconception as soon as I detected it while I was walking around the class observing the different groups. I approached one of the groups with the following question:

T: What do you understand by 'large'?

Students explained by using their hands in a vertical way, saying that 'some things can be very large'. As soon as I noticed that they did not have the meaning clear, I reminded them that some words can look similar to Spanish ones, but they will not necessarily translate the same.

While I was observing each group interact with among themselves, I was impressed to see how they joined together and helped each other by exploring and analyzing the written texts that they were asked to 'didactize'. In reference to the material that was developed for the treatment, I felt it was ideal to didactize different short texts, in my case, different jokes, so that the discoveries could be presented by different groups.

Another aspect that I noticed from my students was the fact that throughout the school year, prepositions became complicated for them. Prepositions were in fact one of the major problems found in their written assignments. Again, this may be because of my students' higher level of English. Fortunately, with the treatments, students realized that certain prepositions go next to verbs; for example, we say: 'I dreamt about', not dreamt with; we say 'broke up with', and not 'broke with'; 'handed in', instead of 'handed' Φ . In fact, they came to the conclusion that English is full of phrasal verbs and verbs with prepositions, to such extent that in order to have native-like fluency, it is necessary to use these verbs and prepositions in one's lexical repertoire. In order for structures and words to be internalized in one's system of language, they need to be acquired in a natural way. I tell my students that the best way to acquire structures and new vocabulary is through reading and practice.



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As a teacher, I was delighted to see how each group was working as a team, establishing similar findings that later would be reinforced and shared among the class.

To continue, concerning 'Omissions', students tend to use the word '*other*' for things that are in singular form. For example: '*Other problem*' instead of '*Another problem*'. In Spanish there is a singular form and a plural form for saying '*otro*'. This was something they noticed when translating the phrase: '*another week*'.

It is known that for EFL teachers who know the same language as their students, errors can become somewhat predictable. This is because sharing a common language spoken in the place where the target one is being learned is a big strength; it is in my opinion truly beneficial. We can remember what James mentioned about this, "There is at least one other language involved in the FL learning operation: the learner's mother tongue (MT) or L1 (4). This is why I believe it is erroneous to say that students never make use of Spanish; after all, it will always be the first language spoken by them, and this means that they will make comparisons or translations either intentionally or unintentionally.

To continue, I would like to mention the Proverbs that were intentionally assigned for Didacticized-Translation. Their purpose was to make students contrast the use of the Zero article, as well as the Definite article. Taking the first proverb: '*Silence is golden*' = *el silencio es oro*, as one could see there is no article that precedes the word '*silence*'. This is in singular form, and it can also apply to plural forms: '*Business is business*' = *los negocios son negocios*.

For this activity students were asked to form groups of three: two translators, one observer. The translators had to translate and therefore spot the differences; meanwhile the observer had to make sure her team members were establishing correct findings. The subsequent tasks had slight variations.

As I was moving from group to group, I started to notice that some students started to analyze notions of tenses. They started to discover patterns that distinguish one from the other.



The students had started to build their own hypotheses and to share them with one another, confirming what was needed to be confirmed; they were working as a team.

5.2 Analysis of the results perceived after the treatment

As has been seen, determining my students' errors was the starting point for the Awareness-Raising treatment applied on my students. We can recall what Corder mentioned as "errors are evidence of the learners' in-built syllabus, or of what they have taken in, rather than what teachers think they have put in: *intake should not be equated with input.*"

Awareness-raising activities were an alternative to treat the errors that were repetitive and were difficult for students to overcome. They played a role in the Task-Based Language approach mentioned by Willis (Willis 90) which was applied to my teaching situation.

As one saw in Table 4 of the Results section, 'Perceived results after the treatment', there is a rating scale that had criteria from 1 to 4. Students met my expectations according to my perception as a teacher and as a researcher. They showed an increased interest in what they were doing since it was the first time that they had worked with translation; they became aware that there are no exact equivalents for every grammar aspect from English to Spanish. Their communicative abilities improved considerably.

5.3 Analysis of the student questionnaires

With reference to Table 5, the 'First student questionnaire', the following analysis was made:

67% of my students showed a greater ability and confidence in learning, while 33% remained just above the average levels. While 78% showed more confidence when communicating, 22% remained almost the same as when they started the school year. This last percentage refers to a small number of students who at the beginning of the school year showed a lack of interest in learning English. This made the application of the treatment somewhat difficult.

In addition, all of the students indicated that this had been the first time that a teacher has assigned time and attention to the errors that tend to be made

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repetitively by them. In fact, one student stressed the fact that she never would have known that the word '*deberes*' in English, is not said as 'homeworks', but 'homework'. This was definitely a difficult error to raise students' awareness of. Moreover, another student mentioned that the system adopted by the teachers at all times throughout their school years, teachers would write down symbols whenever there would be an error made in a written assignment. It seems that although the teacher prompted students with special lettering and symbols, students would not fully understand why they had done something wrong.

All of the students showed reacted positively to the treatment even though it was the first time that they had made use of Spanish in the classroom. Everyone said that it was a new way for treating errors, that the treatment was engaging, and that they were open to more of these activities being done in class. In general, after the treatment I could perceive that they were communicating (writing and speaking) more effectively with the exception of 22% who as was mentioned earlier, had a lack of interest in learning. Also, two students had been in different schools prior to their entrance to 'Catalinas' high school.

Finally, it was delightful to see that my students mentioned that they would like to do more of these Awareness-Raising activities in the future. In fact, they enjoyed working with jokes; therefore, there were no significant recommendations for future sessions.

Now I would like to refer to Table 6: The second student questionnaire for Language Students. Below are the results of the questionnaire applied to the students:

As was mentioned before, many of my students have been in 'Catalinas', since kindergarten, or since their first years of elementary school. The 'English at all times' Policy has always existed. In my opinion as a researcher, it proves that when a policy such as this one is applied at early stages in language learning, as early as childhood, it provides excellent long-term results. This explains the high level of communicative abilities recognized in the participants of this action research study. In fact, we can see that 72% of the participants of this questionnaire answered that in the past their teachers preferred to use



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English only, while 33% answered that in some situations Spanish was allowed. Continuing with the next question, 33% answered that this use of Spanish oscillated between 10% and 20%, while for 11%, 60% and more was used. 67% mentioned that Spanish was used in high school; this is more than the 33% who said that it was used in elementary school. In relation to the second question “During your learning experience, have you ever had teachers who would use Spanish in class?”, the results showed that 33% of the class had teachers who have made recourse to Spanish in class. This makes me think that the rest of the respondents have missed out on the advantages of having something clarified in their mother tongue when it was needed. This occurred more in high school representing 78%; in advanced levels it was 44%. 56% said that Spanish is used in the classroom for explaining difficult terms. While 6% said that it is used by the teacher when he/she teaches vocabulary.

For question 4, students were allowed to respond freely. It is important to mention that 5 students responded that it is disadvantageous; some of the reasons were the following: “...our school is *Bilingual and therefore we have to speak English*”; “...we get used to using Spanish when we don’t understand something”; “...we should make an effort to understand what we are learning”. On the other hand, 13 students commented positively; some of the responses were as follows: “...it facilitates comprehension”; “...you learn faster”; “...it could be another way to learn”; “...it is advantageous when it is used in times really needed”; “...it helps understand grammar and vocabulary better”.

Concerning Question 5, 67% said that they feel that they learn better when they use Spanish only in situations when it is strictly necessary. 11% said that they would like to use Spanish freely, while 22% said that English only should be used at all times.

I believe that Question 6 invites us to analyze how important students’ native language can be when learning a second or foreign one. 78% of the respondents said that when they learn vocabulary as well as when they learn grammar they tend to translate words and make comparisons between the two languages in order to facilitate comprehension. If we compare this to the 22% that affirm that they do not, we can see that although Spanish is ‘forbidden’ in



the classroom, the reality is different. In real life, students use their first language more than is thought, and they consider this very helpful.

With regard to Question 9, students reaffirm that they cannot leave Spanish aside at all times. Half of the respondents answered that they learned more effectively when they used Spanish; the other half said the contrary. They prefer teachers to use it only when it is necessary.

Regarding the way my students treated errors in the past, apparently they had stopped paying attention to their own grammar errors. What they needed to become aware of was the instances where a grammatical structure was missing, when it was redundant, or when it was erroneously used. In the past, my students were not aware that they were making errors and that they were practically the same errors for the whole class. This is why they were asked to carry out the Didacticized-translations on paper, where it was easier to notice errors.

5.4 Analysis of the teacher questionnaire

Now I would like to analyze the results of the questionnaire applied to EFL Teachers at Catalinas.

As we can see in the results section, table 7, 89% of the teachers said that they notice that their students continue to make the same errors, despite correction. 67% consider the use of Spanish as a way to correct these errors, while 33% would never use Spanish to correct their students.

As for Question 3, everyone responded that they do in fact allow Spanish in their classrooms, even though 67% say that their place of work does not allow its use in the classroom. Despite this, 89% state that they use Spanish, ranging from 10 to 20%, preferably at times when it is strictly needed.

In regards to question 7, the response demonstrates that 78% of the students think that when teachers know their students' native language, this becomes helpful for their learning process. 22% responded negatively.

67% of the teachers said that they *would* make use of Spanish to teach certain grammar structures. However, only 56% said that *they have* used Spanish to explain or contrast grammar points.



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Finally 78% said that they would consider using *translation* from English to Spanish in order to help students become aware of certain grammar structures. This shows that although translation has never been used by these teachers, it could be used in the future. Therefore, Didacticized-translation can become a helpful tool for language teachers who have never believed in the benefits of using their students' mother tongue for learning.

To continue, I would like to analyze the interviews that were carried out with one student and with three teachers. Table 8 shows the questions for this interview. The student interviewed showed an interest in the activities carried out for the treatment. This interest perhaps arose due to the fact that it had been this student's first time that she had used Spanish in class. This student was the type of student that put a lot of effort into learning. Since she stated that in the past her teachers would mark her errors with symbols using a red pen, she made me realize that this traditional way of correcting students' errors was not effective enough to 'treat' the errors that need to be treated. In fact, I believe that this is why many students show a tendency to make the same errors again and again, implying that these errors can someday fossilize if they are not properly treated.

In Question three, the student said that she enjoyed Didacticized Translation as a means to raise her awareness of her grammar errors. This had been new for her; never before had her errors received so much attention. In fact, this student was a type of learner that liked her findings to be confirmed with the help of the teacher, this confirmation happened in the last stage of the treatment, when each group had showed their findings.

My student said that one difficulty she encountered was the translation of some words. This was lessened due to the fact that the members of the group help each other in the task of translating; however, as my role was also a facilitating one, I was able to help certain groups only when it was strictly needed.

Table 9 shows the results of the interview with three teachers. The first teacher (Teacher A), stated that her way of treating errors was precisely by writing symbols on top of the errors found in students' written texts. She

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acknowledges that the use of Spanish is impossible to avoid because it is our students' mother tongue, the first language they have ever learnt.

Teacher B said that she only uses Spanish when she teaches the Passive Voice. This is understandable because of the difficulties encountered when we teach our students this form. First of all, this topic requires a lot of time in order for our student to assimilate all of its structures, tenses and uses. Her way of treating errors is through the use of worksheets, which leads me to believe that although students are practicing English through the activities seen in the text, they are not giving attention to the errors that are made.

Teacher C was a North American teacher of English. It is important to mention that she had an excellent accent, and her English was fluent. This teacher answered that "students need to be exposed to English as much as possible". She believes that when we allow our students to make use of Spanish in class, they become used to it, and therefore they use this in excess. However, I believe that the fact that our students share the same native language should be exploited to its fullest. Teachers should make use of Spanish when it is deemed necessary. And applying a treatment such as Didacticized Translation can allow for the use of Spanish, although not on a daily basis, but definitely when the teacher views a need to treat errors that are persistent and can be fossilized some day.

5.5 The students' findings after the Awareness-Raising activities

The findings are shown in Table 3 of the Results' section: Findings during the treatment. Below are the most important ones.

The students discovered that:

- Things cannot be 'literally translated' from English to Spanish.
- Prepositions and phrasal verbs can cause confusion; therefore the best thing that can be done is for students to memorize them.
- Certain words are not said the same way as students thought they were; for example: the word '*homeworks*' is incorrect!
- Adjectives go before nouns and they cannot be pluralized.



- English needs a pronoun before a verb...you cannot begin an affirmative sentence with a verb only.

5.6 *The results perceived from students after the treatment*

I was able to perceive an improvement in their writing abilities. The subsequent written assignments carried out by them, were noticeably better than before the treatment. Applying activities that raised their awareness about certain grammar aspects made them more aware about the errors that in the past, teachers may have tried correcting them either on the spot or with a pen and symbols; the important aspect is that they finally became conscious of these errors when they needed to. I can say that this research met my expectations.

To conclude this section, I would like to say that this research has helped me reflect on my practice; as teachers, we should be given a chance to always

do research for the benefit of our students and to share the findings with our colleagues in the EFL community.



CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMENDATIONS

The present thesis demonstrates how students became aware of troublesome grammar features that were unnoticed before receiving the treatment. Having been able to achieve the objectives that I proposed at the beginning of this thesis, I have reached the following conclusions.

6.1 *Conclusions*

- Spanish can be useful when it is integrated with grammar not precisely *to teach it* but to make students notice where they are making errors. This is better for students that are in advanced levels; rather than for EFL students of beginning levels where in my opinion it can be disadvantageous.
- Didacticized-Translation is a valuable option for the treatment of common grammar errors. Mechanical exercises are not sufficient to raise students' awareness of the definite article, nouns and adjectives. The students showed a constructive reaction to this new treatment. Therefore, the use of Didacticized-Translation constitutes a valid alternative to improve students' language performance in any of the language skills.
- The findings of the present study reveal the effectiveness of the use of the students' native language by noticing important grammar features and preventing the reoccurrence of troublesome errors. Students became actively involved in analyzing and noticing many aspects of grammar by means of identifying particular differences between both languages.
- Students are capable of noticing things on their own; the teacher does not have to tell them everything they have to know. Better results are obtained when the student takes an active role in error correction.
- While students translated pieces of text from English to Spanish, they realized that there was no exact equivalent for every grammar aspect, especially regarding prepositions and phrasal verbs.



- Although three-quarters of the participants said that during their past learning experiences their teachers incorporated an ‘English Only’ Policy in the classroom, only a quarter said that they were capable of leaving Spanish aside when learning grammar. This means that the majority of the participants make covert use of Spanish to help them understand English, even when the use of Spanish is forbidden in the classroom.
- This research shows that Spanish should not be radically banned in EFL classrooms. Because most EFL teachers are Spanish-speaking and know their students’ native language, and because English is not the official second language spoken in Ecuador, this becomes an advantage which students entirely benefit from. The students’ Mother Tongue is very useful for clarification and instruction.
- After the treatment, students demonstrated a positive change in their comprehension, communicative abilities as well as their pragmatic competence. Their confidence also improved considerably.
- Teachers can work with authentic pieces of text and analyze what grammar points can be manipulated in order for them to be Didacticized, therefore providing appropriate treatment to the errors that are most frequent in their students.
- Awareness-Raising activities are not for teaching grammar, but for raising students’ awareness of grammar and their frequent grammar errors. Didacticized-Translation improved the students’ grammatical accuracy in all four language skills.

6.2 *Recommendations*

Below are some recommendations:

- There is a need for the educational institutions of Ecuador to acknowledge that teaching should not be the only priority for a teacher. Teachers should also carry out their own research; they should look for ways to test their beliefs, to prove them and to show other teachers their valuable findings. This is how we all can contribute to the teaching-learning process of our students.



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- research should be carried out using Didacticized Translation for grammar awareness- raising with different age groups; for instance, adults, young adults, or students in their late teens.
- Research should be also carried out using Didacticized Translation for other aspects of language learning, such as vocabulary, special expressions and phrases, and register.



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Patricia Adriana Díaz Peralta



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Patricia Adriana Díaz Peralta



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ANNEXES

Annex 1

OBSERVER SHEET

DIDACTISIZED TRANSLATION I

Name of the Observer:

Group

Number:

As the observer, you are required to write down ALL the differences that you notice in the translation of certain words or phrases. Note down whenever a literal translation is not possible. Pay close attention to your translators!



TRANSLATOR SHEET

DIDACTISIZED TRANSLATION II

Name of translators 1:

Name of translator 2:

Group Number:

1). The following texts need to be translated into Spanish. Work together and translate it in order to make it understandable. 2). After you have translated the text, review it, and try to spot the instances where you would have made mistakes when writing in English.

GROUP 1

Two elderly women were out driving in a large car. Both could barely see over the dashboard. Cruising along, they came to an intersection. The stoplight was red, but they just went on through. The woman in the passenger seat thought “I must be losing my mind. I swear we just went through a red light.”

A few minutes later, they came to another intersection, and the light was red again. Again, they went right through. This time, the woman in the passenger seat was almost sure that the light had been red but was really concerned that she was mistaken. She was getting nervous and decided to pay very close attention to the next intersection to see what was going on. At the next intersection, sure enough, the light was definitely red, and yet they went right through. She turned to the woman driving and said, “Mildred! Did you know we just ran through three red lights in a row! You could have killed us!”

Mildred turned to her and said, “Oh, am I driving?”

Autora:

Patricia Adriana Díaz Peralta



2). Proverbs: Translate the following proverbs and say what they mean in English.

Silence is golden

Honesty is the best policy

Experience is the best teacher.

All roads lead to Rome

Bad luck comes in threes.

Charity begins at home.

Business is business.

Money doesn't grow on trees.

Nothing ventured, nothing gained.

There's no place like home



Many hands make light work



GROUP 2

1). The following texts need to be translated into Spanish. Work together and translate it in order to make it understandable. 2). After you have translated the text, review it, and try to spot the instances where you would have made mistakes when writing in English.

Excuses, excuses

Excuses for being late for school:

- a. The bus had a puncture and we had to push it into the garage.
- b. I stopped to help an old lady cross the road and she was so slow that it took more than ten minutes.
- c. I was here much earlier, but no one else was, so I went home again thinking school was cancelled.

2. Excuses for not handing in homework:

- a. Dad thought my essays were so good that he sent them off to a magazine,
- b. I handed in my homework and left it on your desk. Have you lost it?
- c. My brother filled my pen with vanishing ink, and when I got up this morning all my writing had vanished.

3. Excuses for not going to school:

- a. There's a bully at school who says he's going to get me for being the teacher's pet.
- b. There were so many sick children with flu that the principal closed the school for the week.
- c. There was chewing gum on my chair and I was stuck to it.



4). It was Monday morning and Mum was having a tough time preparing her son for another week at school.

‘I’m not going to school today’, Jimmy said.

‘What’s up this time?’ Another problem? Mum asked.

‘Nobody likes me. The teachers don’t like me. The kids don’t like me. and I have other problems. I just don’t want to go anymore,’ he complained.

Other people have more problems than you. I am sure this is nothing serious.

‘You’ve just got to go... You’re 40 years old and the Principal of the school.’



GROUP 3

1). The following texts need to be translated into Spanish. Work together and translate it in order to make it understandable. 2). After you have translated the text, review it, and try to spot the instances where you would have made mistakes when writing in English.

A Really Bad Day

There were these two guys sitting at a bar one day. One of the guys just sits there, looking at his drink. He stays like that for half of an hour.

Then, this big trouble-making truck driver steps next to him, takes the drink from the guy, and just drinks it all down. The poor man starts crying. The truck driver says, "Come on man, I was just joking. Here, I'll buy you another drink. I just can't stand seeing a man cry."

"No, it's not that. These past days have been the worst of my life. First, I fall asleep, and I get late for work. My boss, furious, told me that I was fired. When I leave the building, the guard says to me "There is something I have to tell you... somebody has stolen your car". The police arrived and said: "We're sorry. There isn't anything we can do". I get a cab to return home, and when I leave it, I remember I left my wallet and credit cards there. The cab driver just drives away."

"I go home, and when I get there, I find my wife in bed with the gardener. I leave home, and come to this bar. And just when I was thinking about putting an end to my life, you show up and drink my poison."



Students at a religious institute enrolled in a class on the life of Jesus arrive at their classroom to take the final exam. When they arrive, the student advisor tells them that the test would be given in another building on the other side of the campus. As the students rushed across campus to the new room, each was approached by a homeless man asking for help. None of the students stopped, anxious to arrive on time for the exam.

The students were worried about arriving late. The instructor was waiting for the students when they finally reached the classroom. He explains to them that the beggar was an actor, planted by him to test their reaction. Because the students demonstrated that they hadn't learned anything by studying the life of Jesus, they all failed the exam.



GROUP 4

1). The following texts need to be translated into Spanish. Work together and translate it in order to make it understandable. 2). After you have translated the text, review it, and try to spot the instances where you would have made mistakes when writing in English.

Bill was sitting alone in the hospital room at his dying wife's bedside. It was difficult to hear her above the many life sustaining devices, as her voice was little more than a light whisper. "Bill darling," she breathed...I dreamt about this day...I've got a confession to make before I go... I ... I'm the one who took the \$10,000 from your safe in the house ... I spent it on a fling with your best friend Jimmy. And it was I who forced your mistress to leave the community in utter disgrace. I'm afraid I also was the one who reported you to the IRS for income tax evasion..."

"That's all right dearest; don't even give it a second thought." said Bill. "I have a small confession too. I'm the one who poisoned you."

A doctor says to his patient, "I have bad news and worse news".

"Oh dear, what's the bad news?" asks the patient.

The doctor replies, "You only have 24 hours to live."

"That's terrible", said the patient. "How can the news possibly be worse?"

The doctor replies, "I've been trying to contact you since yesterday".



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GROUP 5

1). The following texts need to be translated into Spanish. Work together and translate it in order to make it understandable. 2). After you have translated the text, review it, and try to spot the instances where you would have made mistakes when writing in English.

After she woke up, a woman told her husband, "I just dreamed that you gave me a pearl necklace for Valentine's Day. What do you think it means?"

"You'll know tonight," he said.

That evening, the man came home with a package and gave it to his wife. Delighted, she opened it - to find a book entitled, "The meaning of dreams".

THE PHILOSOPHY EXAM

For the final exam in a philosophy class, the professor took his chair and placed it on top of his desk. He gives each student a blank piece of paper and says, "Prove to me that this chair does not exist". Most papers handed in were essays explaining how nothing was real or references to ancient philosophers. The only paper that received an A was just two words long:

"What chair?"



Annex II

The following texts are based on short jokes in English. Work in groups of three; Student A will be the Observer; she is in charge of analyzing, comparing, and detecting DIFFERENCES between English and Spanish. Student B will be the Translator; she is in charge of translating the short texts. Student C will be the Decision-Maker, who will also be in charge of writing down all the differences that are found in the text.



1). About Daisy

Gerunds; prepositions; adjectives

English version

SPANISH

TRANSLATION

<p>SINGLE BLACK FEMALE seeks male companionship, ethnicity unimportant. I'm a very good girl who LOVES to play different things. I enjoy long walks in the woods; I like riding in your pickup truck, hunting, camping and fishing trips, cozy winter nights lying by the fire. Candlelight dinners will have me eating out of your hand.. I'll be waiting for you while you are at work. I'll be at the front door when you get home from work, wearing only what nature gave me...My phone number is (404) 875-6420 ...Call me; ask for Daisy, I'll be your dream come true....</p> <p>Over 150 men found themselves talking to the Atlanta Humane Society (DAISY IS A BLACK LABRADOR)</p>	
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Please give a translation for each of the following word or words in English; notice when something exists in English, but not in Spanish, or vice versa. Do this with the help of your Observer.

Autora:

Patricia Adriana Díaz Peralta



<i>English word (s)</i>	<i>Translation (English to Spanish)</i>
ADJECTIVES:	
Single, black, female	<i>Soltera, negra, de sexo femenino.</i>
Male companionship	<i>Compañía masculina</i>
Unimportant	<i>No importante</i>
A very good girl	<i>Una niña muy buena</i>
Different things	<i>Cosas diferentes</i>
Long walks	<i>Caminatas largas</i>
Pickup trucks	<i>Camionetas</i>
Cozy winter nights	<i>Noches acogedoras de invierno</i>
Candlelight dinners	<i>Cenas a la luz de la vela</i>
Front door	<i>Puerta frontal</i>
Phone number	<i>Numero de teléfono</i>
Black Labrador	<i>Labrador negro</i>
GERUNDS:	
riding in your pickup truck	<i>Subirme en su camioneta</i>
I like hunting	<i>Me gusta cazar</i>
I like camping	<i>Me gusta acampar</i>
I like fishing	<i>Me gusta pezcar</i>
I like lying by the fire	<i>Me gusta acostarme junto al fuego.</i>

c). OBSERVER + TRANSLATOR+DECISION MAKER: From each grammar topic, please write down all the things you noticed: in what instances can they be used, how do they differ from Spanish? Also write down whatever you consider important, examples, etc.

Adjectives: In English, they go before a noun; they are not countable;
Prepositions: a preposition can have more than one meaning, unlike Spanish, which prepositions usually mean the same thing (at= en, a); two could be together: *out of*;
Gerunds: they could be used as nouns , adjectives (*fishing trips*) or instead of infinitives = *to swim-swimming (students tend to omit the ING).*



Definite and zero article; verb+preposition



2). The Married couple

English version

Spanish

translation

The married couple

There was once a lovely married couple that lived in China, in Sichuan Province. They were Mr. and Mrs. Chang. One day, they decided to go out and look for a nice place to spend the weekend. They finally passed *Emei Shan Mountain*, a Buddhist mountain of the west, which road was full of farms. It was a rural area but people went by there especially on weekends.

Because the couple had a bad argument at home, a terrible day at work, and because they were angry at each other; none of them said a word all through the trip; they just listened to the radio.

As they passed a barnyard something caught the husband's attention. He saw many animals: sheep, goats, and pigs. Mr. Chang looked at Mrs. Chang and said: 'your relatives?' 'Yup, I agree with you'... 'They are my in-laws'.

Autora:

Patricia Adriana Díaz Peralta



Give a translation for each of the following word or words in English; notice when something exists in English, but not in Spanish, or vice versa. Do this with the help of your Observer.

<i>English word (s)</i>	<i>Translation (English to Spanish)</i>
Defiinite and Zero article	
China	<i>...la China</i>
Sichuan Province	<i>...la provincial de Sichuan</i>
Mr. and Mrs. Chang	<i>El señor y la Señora Chang</i>
Emei Shan Mountain	<i>La Montaña Emei Shan</i>
Verb+preposition	
Went by	<i>Pasaban</i>
Listened to the radio	<i>Escuchar Ø la radio</i>
Looked at the scenery	<i>Miró Ø el paisaje</i>
Agree with you	<i>Estoy de acuerdo con usted</i>
Noun+preposition	
On weekends	<i>Los fines de semana</i>
At home	<i>En la casa</i>
At work	<i>En el trabajo</i>
Others	
Angry at him	<i>Enojado CON el</i>
Husband's attention	<i>LA atención del esposo</i>
Spend (time)	<i>Pasar (tiempo)</i>



c). **OBSERVER + TRANSLATOR+DECISION MAKER:** From each grammar topic, please write down all the things you noticed: in what instances can they be used, how do they differ from Spanish? Also write down whatever you consider important, examples, etc.

Definite Article: *It is used with nouns; could be used before something singular or plural; to refer to something specific; to something that is known; it means el, la, los or las.*

Verb+Preposition: *a preposition can have more than one meaning, unlike Spanish, which prepositions usually mean the same thing (at= en, a); two could be together: out fo, etc. the preposition must follow the main verb; some could be separable,*

Preposition+Noun: *they should also be memorized because in Spanish they need a definite article the but in English they do not...*



Past perfect; verbs + preposition, phrasal verbs; past simple words to express time; say/tell



3. Valentina the great admirer.

ENGLISH

SPANISH TRANSLATION

PG. 154:

Valentina had been a great admirer of the Mexican singer Marc Anthony since she was ten years old. Marc Anthony had been famous for his Spanish and English romantic music.

Two weeks ago, Valentina saw Marc Anthony coming out of a club. She told her friends that soon she would get his autograph. Last week she went back to the club just to see if she was lucky enough to run into him again.

So, she went up to him, told him that she was a great admirer, and asked for his autograph. Anthony said to her: 'ok'. He scribbled on a bit of paper and handed it to Valentina. When she looked at the paper, it said, 'Go away.'



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Give a translation for each of the following word or words in English; notice when something exists in English, but not in Spanish, or vice versa. Do this with the help of your Observer.

<i>English word (s)</i>	<i>Translation (English to Spanish)</i>
ten years old	<i>Diez años</i>
romantic music	<i>Musica romantic</i>
Two weeks ago	<i>Hace dos semanas´</i>
coming out	<i>Salir</i>
told	<i>Dijo</i>
would get	<i>Conseguiría</i>
Last week	<i>La semana pasada</i>
went back	<i>Regresó</i>
lucky enough	<i>Suficientemente afortunada</i>
run into	<i>Encontrarse</i>
she went up to him	<i>Se acercó a el</i>
told him	<i>Le dijo a el</i>
said to her	<i>Le dijo a ella</i>
asked for	<i>Pidió</i>
looked at	<i>Miró</i>
Go away	<i>Vayase.</i>



c). **OBSERVER + TRANSLATOR+DECISION MAKER:** From each grammar topic, please write down all the things you noticed: in what instances can they be used, how do they differ from Spanish? Also write down whatever you consider important, examples, etc.

Past perfect: could be written with two or three verbs; had is not a verb but a helping verb; the next verb after had is the past participle of 'BE'; the next verb after 'BE' could be in the past participle.

Past simple: verbs could be ending in 'ed' or it could have a different way of being spelt; in affirmative sentences we do not write did.

Words to express the past: last week= could be at the beginning of a sentence; ago= it is used at the ending of the time phrase; since= the period of time.

Say/tell: we say 'said' (in the past) + that or we say tell + objective pronoun or a noun.

To say an age, we use the words 'years old'.

<http://jokesfunny.wordpress.com/2009/07/31/funny-inheritance-joke/>



4). Three sisters

ENGLISH

SPANISH TRANSLATION

<p><u>Once upon a time</u> there were three sisters. They were 92, 94 and 96 years old, and they all lived together. One night the 96 year old ran a bath. She put one foot in and paused. "Was I getting in the tub or getting out?" she asked herself. The 94 year old hollered back, "I don't know. I'll come and see." She went up the stairs and stopped. She shouted, "Was I going up or coming down?" The 92 year old sitting at the kitchen table having tea, listening to her sisters <u>shook her head</u> and said, "I hope I never get that forgetful," and knocked on wood just in case. Then she yelled, "I'll come up and help both of you as soon as I see who's at the door." http://www.myenglishpages.com/site_php_files/jokes.php?page=7</p>	
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Give a translation for each of the following word or words in English; notice when something exists in English, but not in Spanish, or vice versa. Do this with the help of your Observer.

<i>English word (s)</i>	<i>Translation (English to Spanish)</i>
Once upon a time	<i>De vez en cuando</i>
there were	<i>Habían</i>
ran a bath	<i>Llenar una tina</i>
put one foot in	
getting in	<i>Poner un pie adentro</i>
getting out	<i>Entrando</i>
asked herself	<i>Saliendo</i>
	<i>Se preguntó</i>
The 94 year old	<i>La de 94 años</i>
I don't know	<i>No se</i>
went up	<i>Subió</i>
going up	<i>Subiendo</i>
coming down	<i>Bajando</i>
sitting at	<i>Sentado</i>
having tea	<i>Tomando te</i>
listening to	
shook her	<i>Escuchando</i>
get	<i>Le movió</i>
just in case	<i>Tenga</i>
come up	<i>Por si acaso</i>
both of you	<i>Subir</i>
as soon as I see	<i>Ambos</i>
at the door	<i>Tan pronto como vea</i>
	<i>En la puerta</i>



c). **OBSERVER + TRANSLATOR+DECISION MAKER:** From each grammar topic, please write down all the things you noticed: in what instances can they be used, how do they differ from Spanish? Also write down whatever you consider important, examples, etc.

phrasal verbs and verbs plus prepositions

different verbs (have tea..tomando te)

extra preposition



5). The Power of Woman

ENGLISH

SPANISH TRANSLATION

<p>There were 11 people - ten men and one woman - hanging onto a rope that came down from a helicopter. They all decided that one person should get off, because if they didn't, the rope would break and everyone would start falling. No one could decide who should go, so finally, the woman gave a really touching speech saying how she would give up her life to save the others, because women were used to giving up things for their husbands and children, giving in to men, and not receiving anything in return. When she finished speaking, all the men started clapping.</p>	
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Please give a translation for each of the following word or words in English; notice when something exists in English, but not in Spanish, or vice versa. Do this with the help of your Observer.

<i>English word (s)</i>	<i>Translation (English to Spanish)</i>
People	<i>Personas</i>
Men	<i>Hombres</i>
hanging onto	<i>Colgados</i>
came down	<i>Bajandose</i>
get off	<i>Bajó</i>
if they didn't	<i>Si no</i>
No one	<i>Nadie</i>
give up	<i>Dar</i>
women	<i>Mujeres</i>
to save the others	<i>Salvar a otros</i>
used to giving up	<i>Acostumbrado a dar</i>
children	<i>Niños</i>
giving in	<i>Ceder</i>
not receiving anything	<i>No recibir nada</i>
in return	<i>A cambio</i>
finished speaking	<i>Terminó de hablar</i>
clapping	<i>aplaudiendo</i>



c). **OBSERVER + TRANSLATOR+DECISION MAKER:** From each grammar topic, please write down all the things you noticed: in what instances can they be used, how do they differs from Spanish. Also write down whatever you consider important, examples, etc.

gerunds go after certain verbs-

there are nouns that are irregular: man, woman, children

there are certain phrases that go hand in hand with each other...in return.



6). How many Bibles did you sell?

ENGLISH

SPANISH TRANSLATION

<p>Three little boys were looking for a summer job. Their preacher needed some people to go around and sell Bibles. So the preacher hired two boys without even thinking twice. He was hesitant about hiring the third boy because he suffered from a speech impediment, but he knew how much he needed the job, so he hired him anyway. The preacher said: "Ok so I will meet you on Monday at 3 o'clock to see how you did".</p> <p>The boys walked through a lot of streets. At first, the boys were hungry, they were thirsty, and they were very tired. After the first days of work, they all met at the church. The preacher looked at the first boy and asked him, "How many bibles did you sell?" The boy stood up and said, "35." "Is that all you sold?" the preacher asked. "He looked at the second boy</p>	
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and asked him the same thing. The boy said, "75." "That's good," the preacher replied. He didn't want to ask the third boy but did. The boy with the speech impediment said, "I-I-I s-s-sold 175." The preacher was amazed and asked the boy how he managed to sell all those Bibles. He said, "I-I-I t-t-t-told them to b-b-buy t-t-t-t-them or I will r-r-read it to t-t-t-t-them."



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Give a translation for each of the following word or words in English; notice when something exists in English, but not in Spanish, or vice versa. Do this with the help of your Observer.

<i>English word (s)</i>	<i>Translation (English to Spanish)</i>
looking for	<i>Buscando</i>
summer job	<i>Trabajo de verano</i>
go around	<i>Ir</i>
without even thinking twice	<i>Sin pensar dos veces</i>
hesitant about hiring	<i>Dudoso en contratar</i>
how much	<i>Cuanto</i>
anyway	<i>De cualquier modo</i>
on Monday	<i>El Lunes</i>
at 3 o'clock	<i>A las 3</i>
a lot of streets	<i>Muchas calles</i>
At first	<i>Primero</i>
didn't want	<i>No quiso</i>
were hungry	<i>Tenían hambre</i>
were thirsty	<i>Tenían sed</i>
were very tired	<i>Estaban cansados</i>
at the church	<i>En la iglesia</i>
asked him	<i>Le pregunto</i>
How many	<i>Cuantos</i>
stood up	<i>Se paro</i>
looked at	<i>Miro</i>
didn't want	<i>No quiso</i>



c). **OBSERVER + TRANSLATOR+DECISION MAKER:** From each grammar topic, please write down all the things you noticed: in what instances can they be used, how do they differ from Spanish. Also write down whatever you consider important, examples, etc.

days of the week go with ON

time 'on the dot' is with 'o'clock'.

Prepositions

Twice is two times

How many and how much



Annex III

The following are short jokes that have been prepared in order to raise awareness of pieces of text that should be analyzed. Translate each joke into Spanish in the lines provided for you. What differences can you notice? Work in groups of three. Everyone must be prepared to do the following:

- a. Explain the differences noticed in detail and in front of the class.
- b. Tell the joke.

There is/ there are

1. A very interesting fact

Doctor: Did you know that there are more than 1,000 bones in the human body?
Larry: Shhh, doctor! There are three dogs outside in the waiting room!

For

2. A police officer stops a blonde for speeding and asks her for her license. She replied in a huff, "I wish you guys could get your act together. Just yesterday you take away my license and then today you expect me to show it to you."



Subject pronouns (they tend to be omitted when writing in English).

3. How blonde was she?

She was soooo blonde that...

She asked for a price check at the Dollar Store.

she sold the car for gas money.

she studied for a blood test and failed.

she thought Meow Mix was a record for cats.

she called Taco Bell to see if she could pay her phone bill. she told me to meet her at the corner of "WALK" and "DON'T WALK".



Say and Tell

4. A Horse goes into a bar and the bartender says to him: "Hey buddy, Why the Long Face"

5. A woman told her doctor, 'I have a bad back. 'The doctor told her that it is old age.' The woman says to him, 'I want a second opinion. 'The doctor says, 'OK. you're ugly as well.'

6. When I told the doctor about my loss of memory, he told me to pay in advance.

7. [My girlfriend told me I should be more affectionate. So I said to her: "Ok". And I got two girlfriends.](#)



Object pronouns, adjectives

8. A: Hey, man! Please call me a taxi.
B: Yes, sir. You are a taxi.

9. Possessives A: Just look at that young person with the short hair, green eyes and is wearing blue jeans. Is it a boy or a girl?
B: It's a girl. She's my daughter.
A: Oh, I'm sorry, sir. I didn't know that you were her father.
B: I'm not. I'm her mother.

Did (for ss to notice the use of did, in verb and aux.)

9. Teacher: Did your father help you with your homework?
Student: No, he did it all by himself.



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10. Two goldfish in a bowl talking:

Goldfish 1: Do you believe in God?

Goldfish 2: Of course, I do! Who do you think changes the water?

Three horizontal lines for writing, enclosed in a rectangular box.



Blonde Jokes, Funny blonde jokes, Dumb blond jokes

11. Jealous Revenge

A Blonde discovers that her boyfriend is cheating on her at work, so she goes out and buys a gun. She goes into his office unexpectedly, opens the door, and finds him in the arms of a redhead.

Well, the blonde is angry, She opens her purse to take out the gun but as she does so, she is overcome with grief. She takes the gun and puts it to her head.

The boyfriend yells "No, honey, don't do it." The blond replies "Shut up, you're next."

12. Library Fast food (would/to be hungry)

A blonde was in a library one day. She was hungry, so she approached the librarian and said, "I would like a cheeseburger."

The librarian replied, "Shh! This is a library!" The blonde blushed. "oh, sorry.." then she whispered, "I would like a cheeseburger."



13. How blonde was she?

She was soooo blonde that...

She asked for a price check at the Dollar Store.

she sold the car for gas money.

she studied for a blood test and failed.

she thought Meow Mix was a record for cats.

she called Taco Bell to see if she could pay her phone bill. she told me to meet her at the corner of "WALK" and "DON'T WALK".



Was/were (mistaken with went or with am/is/are):

14. She was Sooooooooo Blonde

* She thought General Motors was in the army.

* She thought Meow Mix was a CD for cats.

15. She was Soooooooooooooooooooooo Blonde...

* She studied for a blood test.

* She sold the car for gas money.
